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## The Claverings.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

#### WHAT LADY ONGAR THOUGHT ABOUT IT.



MR. BURTON, it may perhaps be remembered, had formed in her heart a scheme of her own—a scheme of which she thought with much trepidation, and in which she could not request her husband's assistance, knowing well that he would not only not assist it, but that he would altogether disapprove of it. But yet she could not put it aside from her thoughts, believing that it might be the means of bringing Harry Clavering and Florence together. Her husband had now thoroughly condemned poor Harry, and had passed sentence against him,—not indeed openly to Florence herself, but very often in the hearing of his wife. Cecilia, womanlike, was more angry with circumstances than

with the offending man,—with circumstances and with the woman who stood in Florence's way. She was perfectly willing to forgive Harry, if Harry could only be made to go right at last. He was good-looking and

pleasant, and had nice ways in a house, and was altogether too valuable as a lover to be lost without many struggles. So she kept to her scheme, and at last she carried it into execution.

She started alone from her house one morning, and getting into an omnibus at Brompton had herself put down on the rising ground in Piccadilly, opposite to the Green Park. Why she had hesitated to tell the omnibus-man to stop at Bolton Street can hardly be explained; but she had felt that there would be almost a declaration of guilt in naming that locality. So she got out on the little hill, and walked up in front of the Prime Minister's house,—as it was then,—and of the yellow palace built by one of our merchant princes, and turned into the street that was all but interdicted to her by her own conscience. She turned up Bolton Street, and with a trembling hand knocked at Lady Ongar's door.

Florence in the meantime was sitting alone in Onslow Terrace. She knew now that Harry was ill at Clavering,—that he was indeed very ill, though Mrs. Clavering had assured her that his illness was not dangerous. For Mrs. Clavering had written to herself,—addressing her with all the old familiarity and affection,—with a warmth of affection that was almost more than natural. It was clear that Mrs. Clavering knew nothing of Harry's sins. Or, might it not be possible, Cecilia had suggested, that Mrs. Clavering might have known, and have resolved potentially that those sins should be banished, and become ground for some beautifully sincere repentance? Ah, how sweet it would be to receive that wicked sheep back again into the sheepfold, and then to dock him a little of his wandering powers, to fix him with some pleasant clog, to tie him down as a prudent domestic sheep should be tied, and make him the pride of the flock! But all this had been part of Cecilia's scheme, and of that scheme poor Florence knew nothing. According to Florence's view Mrs. Clavering's letter was written under a mistake. Harry had kept his secret at home, and intended to keep it for the present. But there was the letter, and Florence felt that it was impossible for her to answer it without telling the whole truth. It was very painful to her to leave unanswered so kind a letter as that, and it was quite impossible that she should write of Harry in the old strain. "It will be best that I should tell her the whole," Florence had said, "and then I shall be saved the pain of any direct communication with him." Her brother, to whom Cecilia had repeated this, applauded his sister's resolution. "Let her face it and bear it, and live it down," he had said. "Let her do it at once, so that all this maudlin sentimentality may be at an end." But Cecilia would not accede to this, and as Florence was in truth resolved, and had declared her purpose plainly, Cecilia was driven to the execution of her scheme more quickly than she had intended. In the meantime, Florence took out her little desk and wrote her letter. In tears and an agony of spirit which none can understand but women who have been driven to do the same, was it written. Could she have allowed herself to express her thoughts with passion, it would have been comparatively easy; but it behoved her to be calm, to be very quiet in her words,—

almost reticent even in the language which she chose, and to abandon her claim not only without a reproach, but almost without an allusion to her love. Whilst Cecilia was away, the letter was written, and re-written and copied; but Mrs. Burton was safe in this, that her sister-in-law had promised that the letter should not be sent till she had seen it.

Mrs. Burton, when she knocked at Lady Ongar's door, had a little note ready for the servant between her fingers. Her compliments to Lady Ongar, and would Lady Ongar oblige her by an interview. The note contained simply that, and nothing more; and when the servant took it from her, she declared her intention of waiting in the hall till she had received an answer. But she was shown into the dining-room, and there she remained for a quarter of an hour, during which time she was by no means comfortable. Probably Lady Ongar might refuse to receive her; but should that not be the case,—should she succeed in making her way into that lady's presence, how should she find the eloquence wherewith to plead her cause? At the end of the fifteen minutes, Lady Ongar herself opened the door and entered the room. "Mrs. Burton," she said, smiling, "I am really ashamed to have kept you so long; but open confession, they say, is good for the soul, and the truth is that I was not dressed. Then she led the way upstairs, and placed Mrs. Burton on a sofa, and placed herself in her own chair,—from whence she could see well, but in which she could not be well seen,—and stretched out the folds of her morning dress gracefully, and made her visitor thoroughly understand that she was at home and at her ease.

We may, I think, surmise that Lady Ongar's open confession would do her soul but little good, as it lacked truth, which is the first requisite for all confessions. Lady Ongar had been sufficiently dressed to receive any visitor, but had felt that some special preparation was necessary for the reception of the one who had now come to her. She knew well who was Mrs. Burton, and surmised accurately the purpose for which Mrs. Burton had come. Upon the manner in which she now carried herself might hang the decision of the question which was so important to her,—whether that Phœbus in knickerbockers should or should not become lord of Ongar Park. To effect success now, she must maintain an ascendancy during this coming interview, and in the maintenance of all ascendancy, much depends on the outward man or woman; and she must think a little of the words she must use, and a little, too, of her own purpose. She was fully minded to get the better of Mrs. Burton if that might be possible, but she was not altogether decided on the other point. She wished that Harry Clavering might be her own. She would have wished to pension off that Florence Burton with half her wealth, had such pensioning been possible. But not the less did she entertain some half doubts whether it would not be well that she could abandon her own wishes, and give up her own hope of happiness. Of Mrs. Burton personally she had known nothing, and having expected to see a somewhat strong-featured and perhaps rather vulgar woman, and to hear a voice painfully indicative of a strong mind, she was agreeably surprised to

find a pretty, mild lady, who from the first showed that she was half afraid of what she herself was doing. "I have heard your name, Mrs. Burton;" said Lady Ongar, "from our mutual friend, Mr. Clavering, and I have no doubt you have heard mine from him also." This she said in accordance with the little plan which during those fifteen minutes she had laid down for her own guidance.

Mrs. Burton was surprised, and at first almost silenced, by this open mentioning of a name which she had felt that she would have the greatest difficulty in approaching. She said, however, that it was so. She had heard Lady Ongar's name from Mr. Clavering. "We are connected, you know," said Lady Ongar. "My sister is married to his first-cousin, Sir Hugh; and when I was living with my sister at Clavering, he was at the rectory there. That was before my own marriage." She was perfectly easy in her manner, and flattered herself that the ascendancy was complete.

"I have heard as much from Mr. Clavering," said Cecilia.

"And he was very civil to me immediately on my return home. Perhaps you may have heard that also. He took this house for me, and made himself generally useful, as young men ought to do. I believe he is in the same office with your husband; is he not? I hope I may not have been the means of making him idle?"

This was all very well and very pretty, but Mrs. Burton was already beginning to feel that she was doing nothing towards the achievement of her purpose. "I suppose he has been idle," she said, "but I did not mean to trouble you about that." Upon hearing this, Lady Ongar smiled. This supposition that she had really intended to animadvert upon Harry Clavering's idleness was amusing to her as she remembered how little such idleness would signify if she could only have her way.

"Poor Harry!" she said. "I supposed his sins would be laid at my door. But my idea is, you know, that he never will do any good at such work as that."

"Perhaps not;—that is, I really can't say. I don't think Mr. Burton has ever expressed any such opinion; and if he had ——"

"If he had, you wouldn't mention it."

"I don't suppose I should, Lady Ongar;—not to a stranger."

"Harry Clavering and I are not strangers," said Lady Ongar, changing the tone of her voice altogether as she spoke.

"No; I know that. You have known him longer than we have. I am aware of that."

"Yes; before he ever dreamed of going into your husband's business, Mrs. Burton; long before he had ever been to—Stratton."

The name of Stratton was an assistance to Cecilia, and seemed to have been spoken with the view of enabling her to commence her work. "Yes," she said, "but nevertheless he did go to Stratton. He went to Stratton, and there he became acquainted with my sister-in-law, Florence Burton."

"I am aware of it, Mrs. Burton."



"And he also became engaged to her."

"I am aware of that too. He has told me as much himself."

"And has he told you whether he means to keep, or to break that engagement?"

"Ah, Mrs. Burton, is that question fair? Is it fair either to him, or to me? If he has taken me into his confidence and has not taken you, should I be doing well to betray him? Or if there can be anything in such a secret specially interesting to myself, why should I be made to tell it to you?"

"I think the truth is always the best, Lady Ongar."

"Truth is always better than a lie;—so at least people say, though they sometimes act differently; but silence may be better than either."

"This is a matter, Lady Ongar, in which I cannot be silent. I hope you will not be angry with me for coming to you,—or for asking you these questions——"

"O dear, no."

"But I cannot be silent. My sister-in-law must at any rate know what is to be her fate."

"Then why do you not ask him?"

"He is ill at present."

"Ill! Where is he ill? Who says he is ill?" And Lady Ongar, though she did not quite leave her chair, raised herself up and forgot all her preparations. "Where is he, Mrs. Burton? I have not heard of his illness."

"He is at Clavering;—at the parsonage."

"I have heard nothing of this. What ails him? If he be really ill, dangerously ill, I conjure you to tell me. But pray tell me the truth. Let there be no tricks in such a matter as this."

"Tricks, Lady Ongar!"

"If Harry Clavering be ill, tell me what ails him. Is he in danger?"

"His mother in writing to Florence says that he is not in danger; but that he is confined to the house. He has been taken by some fever." On that very morning Lady Ongar had received a letter from her sister, begging her to come to Clavering Park during the absence of Sir Hugh; but in the letter no word had been said as to Harry's illness. Had he been seriously, or at least dangerously ill, Hermione would certainly have mentioned it. All this flashed across Julia's mind as these tidings about Harry reached her. If he were not really in danger, or even if he were, why should she betray her feeling before this woman? "If there had been much in it," she said, resuming her former position and manners, "I should no doubt have heard of it from my sister."

"We hear that it is not dangerous," continued Mrs. Burton; "but he is away, and we cannot see him. And, in truth, Lady Ongar, we cannot see him any more until we know that he means to deal honestly by us."

"Am I the keeper of his honesty?"

"From what I have heard, I think you are. If you will tell me that I have heard falsely, I will go away and beg your pardon for my intrusion."

But if what I have heard be true, you must not be surprised that I show this anxiety for the happiness of my sister. If you knew her, Lady Ongar, you would know that she is too good to be thrown aside with indifference."

"Harry Clavering tells me that she is an angel,—that she is perfect."

"And if he loves her, will it not be a shame that they should be parted?"

"I said nothing about his loving her. Men are not always fond of perfection. The angels may be too angelic for this world."

"He did love her."

"So I suppose ;—or at any rate he thought that he did."

"He did love her, and I believe he loves her still."

"He has my leave to do so, Mrs. Burton."

Cecilia, though she was somewhat afraid of the task which she had undertaken, and was partly awed by Lady Ongar's style of beauty and demeanour, nevertheless felt that if she still hoped to do any good, she must speak the truth out at once. She must ask Lady Ongar whether she held herself to be engaged to Harry Clavering. If she did not do this, nothing could come of the present interview.

"You say that, Lady Ongar, but do you mean it?" she asked. "We have been told that you also are engaged to marry Mr. Clavering."

"Who has told you so?"

"We have heard it. I have heard it, and have been obliged to tell my sister that I had done so."

"And who told you? Did you hear it from Harry Clavering himself?"

"I did. I heard it in part from him."

"Then why have you come beyond him to me? He must know. If he has told you that he is engaged to marry me, he must also have told you that he does not intend to marry Miss Florence Burton. It is not for me to defend him or to accuse him. Why do you come to me?"

"For mercy and forbearance," said Mrs. Burton, rising from her seat and coming over to the side of the room in which Lady Ongar was seated.

"And Miss Burton has sent you?"

"No; she does not know that I am here; nor does my husband know it. No one knows it. I have come to tell you that before God this man is engaged to become the husband of Florence Burton. She has learned to love him, and has now no other chance of happiness."

"But what of his happiness?"

"Yes; we are bound to think of that. Florence is bound to think of that above all things."

"And so am I. I love him too;—as fondly, perhaps, as she can do. I loved him first, before she had even heard his name."

"But, Lady Ongar——"

"Yes; you may ask the question if you will, and I will answer it truly." They were both standing now and confronting each other. "Or

I will answer it without your asking it. I was false to him. I would not marry him because he was poor; and then I married another because he was rich. All that is true. But it does not make me love him the less now. I have loved him through it all. Yes; you are shocked, but it is true. I have loved him through it all. And what am I to do now, if he still loves me? I can give him wealth now."

"Wealth will not make him happy."

"It has not made me happy; but it may help to do so with him. But with me at any rate there can be no doubt. It is his happiness to which I am bound to look. Mrs. Burton, if I thought that I could make him happy, and if he would come to me, I would marry him to-morrow, though I broke your sister's heart by doing so. But if I felt that she could do so more than I, I would leave him to her, though I broke my own. I have spoken to you very openly. Will she say as much as that?"

"She would act in that way. I do not know what she would say."

"Then let her do so, and leave him to be the judge of his own happiness. Let her pledge herself that no reproaches shall come from her, and I will pledge myself equally. It was I who loved him first, and it is I who have brought him into this trouble. I owe him everything. Had I been true to him, he would never have thought of, never have seen, Miss Florence Burton."

All that was, no doubt, true, but it did not touch the question of Florence's right. The fact, on which Mrs. Burton wished to insist, if only she knew how, was this, that Florence had not sinned at all, and that Florence therefore ought not to bear any part of the punishment. It might be very true that Harry's fault was to be excused in part because of Lady Ongar's greater and primary fault;—but why should Florence be the scapegoat?

"You should think of his honour as well as his happiness," said Mrs. Burton at last.

"That is rather severe, Mrs. Burton, considering that it is said to me in my own house. Am I so low as that, that his honour will be tarnished if I become his wife?" But she, in saying this, was thinking of things of which Mrs. Burton knew nothing.

"His honour will be tarnished," said she, "if he do not marry her whom he has promised to marry. He was welcomed by her father and mother to their house, and then he made himself master of her heart. But it was not his till he had asked for it, and had offered his own and his hand in return for it. Is he not bound to keep his promise? He cannot be bound to you after any such fashion as that. If you are solicitous for his welfare, you should know that if he would live with the reputation of a gentleman, there is only one course open to him."

"It is the old story," said Lady Ongar; "the old story! Has not somebody said that the gods laugh at the perjuries of lovers? I do not know that men are inclined to be much more severe than the gods. These broken hearts are what women are doomed to bear."

"And that is to be your answer to me, Lady Ongar?"

"No; that is not my answer to you. That is the excuse that I make for Harry Clavering. My answer to you has been very explicit. Pardon me if I say that it has been more explicit than you had any right to expect. I have told you that I am prepared to take any step that may be most conducive to the happiness of the man whom I once injured, but whom I have always loved. I will do this, let it cost myself what it may; and I will do this let the cost to any other woman be what it may. You cannot expect that I should love another woman better than myself." She said this, still standing, not without something more than vehemence in her tone. In her voice, in her manner, and in her eye there was that which amounted almost to ferocity. She was declaring that some sacrifice must be made, and that she recked little whether it should be of herself or of another. As she would immolate herself without hesitation, if the necessity should exist, so would she see Florence Burton destroyed without a twinge of remorse, if the destruction of Florence would serve the purpose which she had in view. You and I, O reader, may feel that the man for whom all this was to be done was not worth the passion. He had proved himself to be very far from such worth. But the passion, nevertheless, was there, and the woman was honest in what she was saying.

After this Mrs. Burton got herself out of the room as soon as she found an opening which allowed her to go. In making her farewell speech, she muttered some indistinct apology for the visit which she had been bold enough to make. "Not at all," said Lady Ongar. "You have been quite right;—you are fighting your battle for the friend you love bravely; and were it not that the cause of the battle must, I fear, separate us hereafter, I should be proud to know one who fights so well for her friends. And when all this is over and has been settled, in whatever way it may be settled, let Miss Burton know from me that I have been taught to hold her name and character in the highest possible esteem." Mrs. Burton made no attempt at further speech, but left the room with a low curtsy.

Till she found herself out in the street, she was unable to think whether she had done most harm or most good by her visit to Bolton Street,—whether she had in any way served Florence, or whether she had simply confessed to Florence's rival the extent of her sister's misery. That Florence herself would feel the latter to be the case, when she should know it all, Mrs. Burton was well aware. Her own ears had tingled with shame as Harry Clavering had been discussed as a grand prize for which her sister was contending with another woman,—and contending with so small a chance of success. It was terrible to her that any woman dear to her should seem to seek for a man's love. And the audacity with which Lady Ongar had proclaimed her own feelings had been terrible also to Cecilia. She was aware that she was meddling with things which were foreign to her nature, and which would be odious to her husband. But yet, was not the battle worth fighting? It was not to be endured that Florence should seek after this thing; but, after all, the possession of the

thing in question was the only earthly good that could give any comfort to poor Florence. Even Cecilia, with all her partiality for Harry, felt that he was not worth the struggle ; but it was for her now to estimate him at the price which Florence might put upon him,—not at her own price.

But she must tell Florence what had been done, and tell her on that very day of her meeting with Lady Ongar. In no other way could she stop that letter which she knew that Florence would have already written to Mrs. Clavering. And could she now tell Florence that there was ground for hope ? Was it not the fact that Lady Ongar had spoken the simple and plain truth when she had said that Harry must be allowed to choose the course which appeared to him to be the best for him ? It was hard, very hard, that it should be so. And was it not true also that men, as well as gods, excuse the perjuries of lovers ? She wanted to have back Harry among them as one to be forgiven easily, to be petted much, and to be loved always ; but, in spite of the softness of her woman's nature, she wished that he might be punished sorely if he did not so return. It was grievous to her that he should any longer have a choice in the matter. Heavens and earth ! was he to be allowed to treat a woman as he had treated Florence, and was nothing to come of it ? In spite both of gods and men, the thing was so grievous to Cecilia Burton, that she could not bring herself to acknowledge that it was possible. Such things had not been done in the world which she had known.

She walked the whole way home to Brompton, and had hardly perfected any plan when she reached her own door. If only Florence would allow her to write the letter to Mrs. Clavering, perhaps something might be done in that way. So she entered the house prepared to tell the story of her morning's work.

And she must tell it also to her husband in the evening ! It had been hard to do the thing without his knowing of it beforehand ; but it would be impossible to her to keep the thing a secret from him, now that it was done.

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#### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

##### HOW TO DISPOSE OF A WIFE.

WHEN Sir Hugh came up to town there did not remain to him quite a week before the day on which he was to leave the coast of Essex in Jack Stuart's yacht for Norway, and he had a good deal to do in the meantime in the way of provisioning the boat. Fortnum and Mason, no doubt, would have done it all for him without any trouble on his part, but he was not a man to trust any Fortnum or any Mason as to the excellence of the article to be supplied, or as to the price. He desired to have good wine,—very good wine ; but he did not desire to pay a very high price. No one knew better than Sir Hugh that good wine cannot be bought cheap,—but things may be costly and yet not dear ; or they may be both. To such matters Sir Hugh was wont to pay very close attention

himself. He had done something in that line before he left London, and immediately on his return he went to the work again, summoning Archie to his assistance, but never asking Archie's opinion,—as though Archie had been his head-butler.

Immediately on his arrival in London he cross-questioned his brother as to his marriage prospects. "I suppose you are going with us?" Hugh said to Archie, as he caught him in the hall of the house in Berkeley Square on the morning after his arrival.

"O dear, yes," said Archie. "I thought that was quite understood. I have been getting my traps together." The getting of his traps together had consisted in the ordering of a sailor's jacket with brass buttons, and three pair of white duck trousers.

"All right," said Sir Hugh. "You had better come with me into the City this morning. I am going to Boxall's in Great Thames Street."

"Are you going to breakfast here?" asked Archie.

"No; you can come to me at the Union in about an hour. I suppose you have never plucked up courage to ask Julia to marry you?"

"Yes, I did," said Archie.

"And what answer did you get?" Archie had found himself obliged to repudiate with alacrity the attack upon his courage which his brother had so plainly made; but, beyond that, the subject was one which was not pleasing to him. "Well, what did she say to you?" asked his brother, who had no idea of sparing Archie's feelings in such a matter.

"She said;—indeed I don't remember exactly what it was that she did say."

"But she refused you?"

"Yes;—she refused me. I think she wanted me to understand that I had come to her too soon after Ongar's death."

"Then she must be an infernal hypocrite;—that's all." But of any hypocrisy in this matter the reader will acquit Lady Ongar, and will understand that Archie had merely lessened the severity of his own fall by a clever excuse. After that the two brothers went to Boxall's in the City, and Archie, having been kept fagging all day, was sent in the evening to dine by himself at his own club.

Sir Hugh also was desirous of seeing Lady Ongar, and had caused his wife to say as much in that letter which she wrote to her sister. In this way an appointment had been made without any direct intercourse between Sir Hugh and his sister-in-law. They two had never met since the day on which Sir Hugh had given her away in Clavering Church. To Hugh Clavering, who was by no means a man of sentiment, this signified little or nothing. When Lady Ongar had returned a widow, and when evil stories against her had been rife, he had thought it expedient to have nothing to do with her. He did not himself care much about his sister-in-law's morals; but should his wife become much complicated with a sister damaged in character, there might come of it trouble and annoyance. Therefore, he had resolved that Lady Ongar should be dropped. But

during the last few months things had in some respects changed. The Courton people,—that is to say, Lord Ongar's family,—had given Hugh Clavering to understand that, having made inquiry, they were disposed to acquit Lady Ongar, and to declare their belief that she was subject to no censure. They did not wish themselves to know her, as no intimacy between them could now be pleasant; but they had felt it to be incumbent on them to say as much as that to Sir Hugh. Sir Hugh had not even told his wife, but he had twice suggested that Lady Ongar should be asked to Clavering Park. In answer to both these invitations, Lady Ongar had declined to go to Clavering Park.

And now Sir Hugh had a commission on his hands from the same Courton people, which made it necessary that he should see his sister-in-law, and Julia had agreed to receive him. To him, who was very hard in such matters, the idea of his visit was not made disagreeable by any remembrance of his own harshness to the woman whom he was going to see. He cared nothing about that, and it had not occurred to him that she would care much. But, in truth, she did care very much, and when the hour was coming on which Sir Hugh was to appear, she thought much of the manner in which it would become her to receive him. He had condemned her in that matter as to which any condemnation is an insult to a woman; and he had so condemned her, being her brother-in-law and her only natural male friend. In her sorrow she should have been able to lean upon him; but from the first, without any inquiry, he had believed the worst of her, and had withdrawn from her altogether his support, when the slightest support from him would have been invaluable to her. Could she forgive this? Never; never! She was not a woman to wish to forgive such an offence. It was an offence which it would be despicable in her to forgive. Many had offended her, some had injured her, one or two had insulted her; but to her thinking, no one had so offended her, had so injured her, had so grossly insulted her, as he had done. In what way then would it become her to receive him? Before his arrival she had made up her mind on this subject, and had resolved that she would, at least, say no word of her own wrongs.

"How do you do, Julia?" said Sir Hugh, walking into the room with a step which was perhaps unnaturally quick, and with his hand extended. Lady Ongar had thought of that too. She would give much to escape the touch of his hand, if it were possible; but she had told herself that she would best consult her own dignity by declaring no actual quarrel. So she put out her fingers and just touched his palm.

"I hope Hermy is well?" she said.

"Pretty well, thank you. She is rather lonely since she lost her poor little boy, and would be very glad if you would go to her."

"I cannot do that; but if she would come to me I should be delighted."

"You see it would not suit her to be in London so soon after Hugh's death."



"I am not bound to London. I would go anywhere else,—except to Clavering."

"You never go to Ongar Park, I am told?"

"I have been there."

"But they say you do not intend to go again?"

"Not at present, certainly. Indeed, I do not suppose I shall ever go there. I do not like the place."

"That's just what they have told me. It is about that—partly—that I want to speak to you. If you don't like the place, why shouldn't you sell your interest in it back to the family? They'd give you more than the value for it."

"I do not know that I should care to sell it."

"Why not, if you don't mean to use the house? I might as well explain at once what it is that has been said to me. John Courton, you know, is acting as guardian for the young earl, and they don't want to keep up so large a place as the Castle. Ongar Park would just suit Mrs. Courton,"—Mrs. Courton was the widowed mother of the young earl,—  
"and they would be very happy to buy your interest."

"Would not such a proposition come best through a lawyer?" said Lady Ongar.

"The fact is this,—they think they have been a little hard on you."

"I have never accused them."

"But they feel it themselves, and they think that you might take it perhaps amiss if they were to send you a simple message through an attorney. Courton told me that he would not have allowed any such proposition to be made, if you had seemed disposed to use the place. They wish to be civil, and all that kind of thing."

"Their civility or incivility is indifferent to me," said Julia.

"But why shouldn't you take the money?"

"The money is equally indifferent to me."

"You mean then to say that you won't listen to it? Of course they can't make you part with the place if you wish to keep it."

"Not more than they can make you sell Clavering Park. I do not, however, wish to be uncivil, and I will let you know through my lawyer what I think about it. All such matters are best managed by lawyers."

After that Sir Hugh said nothing further about Ongar Park. He was well aware, from the tone in which Lady Ongar answered him, that she was averse to talk to him on that subject; but he was not conscious that his presence was otherwise disagreeable to her, or that she would resent any interference from him on any subject because he had been cruel to her. So after a little while he began again about Hermione. As the world had determined upon acquitting Lady Ongar, it would be convenient to him that the two sisters should be again intimate, especially as Julia was a rich woman. His wife did not like Clavering Park, and he certainly did not like Clavering Park himself. If he could once get the house shut up, he might manage to keep it shut for some years to come,

His wife was now no more than a burden to him, and it would suit him well to put off the burden on to his sister-in-law's shoulders. It was not that he intended to have his wife altogether dependent on another person, but he thought that if they two were established together, in the first instance merely as a summer arrangement, such establishment might be made to assume some permanence. This would be very pleasant to him. Of course he would pay a portion of the expense,—as small a portion as might be possible,—but such a portion as might enable him to live with credit before the world.

"I wish I could think that you and Hermy might be together while I am absent," he said.

"I shall be very happy to have her if she will come to me," Julia replied.

"What,—here, in London? I am not quite sure that she wishes to come up to London at present."

"I have never understood that she had any objection to being in town," said Lady Ongar.

"Not formerly, certainly; but now since her boy's death——"

"Why should his death make more difference to her than to you?" To this question Sir Hugh made no reply. "If you are thinking of society, she could be nowhere safer from any such necessity than with me. I never go out anywhere. I have never dined out, or even spent an evening in company since Lord Ongar's death. And no one would come here to disturb her."

"I didn't mean that."

"I don't quite know what you did mean. From different causes she and I are left pretty nearly equally without friends."

"Hermione is not left without friends," said Sir Hugh with a tone of offence.

"Were she not, she would not want to come to me. Your society is in London, to which she does not come, or in other country-houses than your own, to which she is not taken. She lives altogether at Clayering, and there is no one there, except your uncle."

"Whatever neighbourhood there is she has,—just like other women."

"Just like some other women, no doubt. I shall remain in town for another month, and after that I shall go somewhere; I don't much care where. If Hermy will come to me as my guest I shall be most happy to have her. And the longer she will stay with me the better. Your coming home need make no difference, I suppose."

There was a keenness of reproach in her tone as she spoke, which even he could not but feel and acknowledge. He was very thick-skinned to such reproaches, and would have left this unnoticed had it been possible. Had she continued speaking he would have done so. But she remained silent, and sat looking at him, saying with her eyes the same thing that she had already spoken with her words. Thus he was driven to speak.

"I don't know," said he, "whether you intend that for a sneer."

She was perfectly indifferent whether or no she offended him. Only that she had believed that the maintenance of her own dignity forbade it, she would have openly rebuked him, and told him that he was not welcome in her house. No treatment from her could, as she thought, be worse than he had deserved from her. His first enmity had injured her, but she could afford to laugh at his present anger. "It is hard to talk to you about Hermy without what you are pleased to call a sneer. You simply wish to rid yourself of her."

"I wish no such thing, and you have no right to say so."

"At any rate you are ridding yourself of her society; and if under those circumstances she likes to come to me I shall be glad to receive her. Our life together will not be very cheerful, but neither she nor I ought to expect a cheerful life."

He rose from his chair now with a cloud of anger upon his brow. "I can see how it is," said he; "because everything has not gone smooth with yourself you choose to resent it upon me. I might have expected that you would not have forgotten in whose house you met Lord Ongar."

"No, Hugh; I forget nothing; neither when I met him, nor how I married him, nor any of the events that have happened since. My memory, unfortunately, is very good."

"I did all I could for you, and should have been safe from your insolence."

"You should have continued to stay away from me, and you would have been quite safe. But our quarrelling in this way is foolish. We can never be friends,—you and I; but we need not be open enemies. Your wife is my sister, and I say again that if she likes to come to me, I shall be delighted to have her."

"My wife," said he, "will go to the house of no person who is insolent to me." Then he took his hat, and left the room without further word or sign of greeting. In spite of his calculations and caution as to money,—in spite of his well-considered arrangements and the comfortable provision for his future ease which he had proposed to himself, he was a man who had not his temper so much under control as to enable him to postpone his anger to his prudence. That little scheme for getting rid of his wife was now at an end. He would never permit her to go to her sister's house after the manner in which Julia had just treated him!

When he was gone Lady Ongar walked about her own room smiling, and at first was well pleased with herself. She had received Archie's overture with decision, but at the same time with courtesy, for Archie was weak, and poor, and powerless. But she had treated Sir Hugh with scorn, and had been enabled to do so without the utterance of any actual reproach as to the wrongs which she herself had endured from him. He had put himself in her power, and she had not thrown away the opportunity. She had told him that she did not want his friendship, and would not be his friend; but she had done this without any loud abuse unbecoming to her either as a countess, a widow, or a lady. For

Hermione she was sorry. Hermione now could hardly come to her. But even as to that she did not despair. As things were going on, it would become almost necessary that her sister and Sir Hugh should be parted. Both must wish it; and if this were arranged, then Hermione should come to her.

But from this she soon came to think again about Harry Clavering. How was that matter to be decided, and what steps would it become her to take as to its decision? Sir Hugh had proposed to her that she should sell her interest in Ongar Park, and she had promised that she would make known her decision on that matter through her lawyer. As she had been saying this she was well aware that she would never sell the property;—but she had already resolved that she would at once give it back, without purchase-money, to the Ongar family, were it not kept that she might hand it over to Harry Clavering as a fitting residence for his lordship. If he might be there, looking after his cattle, going about with the steward subservient at his heels, ministering justice to the Enoch Gubbys and others, she would care nothing for the wants of any of the Courton people. But if such were not to be the destiny of Ongar Park,—if there were to be no such Adam in that Eden,—then the mother of the little lord might take herself thither, and revel among the rich blessings of the place without delay, and with no difficulty as to price. As to price,—had she not already found the money-bag that had come to her to be too heavy for her hands?

But she could do nothing till that question was settled; and how was she to settle it? Every word that had passed between her and Cecilia Burton had been turned over and over in her mind, and she could only declare to herself as she had then declared to her visitor, that it must be as Harry should please. She would submit, if he required her submission; but she could not bring herself to take steps to secure her own misery.

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#### CHAPTER XXXIX.

##### FAREWELL TO DOODLES.

At last came the day on which the two Claverings were to go down to Harwich, and put themselves on board Jack Stuart's yacht. The hall of the house in Berkeley Square was strewed with portmanteaus, gun-cases, and fishing-rods, whereas the wine and packets of preserved meat, and the bottled beer and fish in tins, and the large box of cigars, and the prepared soups, had been sent down by Boxall, and were by this time on board the boat. Hugh and Archie were to leave London this day by train at 5 P.M., and were to sleep on board. Jack Stuart was already there, having assisted in working the yacht round from Brightlingsea.

On that morning Archie had a farewell breakfast at his club with Doodles, and after that, having spent the intervening hours in the billiard-

room, a farewell luncheon. There had been something of melancholy in this last day between the friends, originating partly in the failure of Archie's hopes as to Lady Ongar, and partly perhaps in the bad character which seemed to belong to Jack Stuart and his craft. "He has been at it for years, and always coming to grief," said Doodles. "He is just like a man I know, who has been hunting for the last ten years, and can't sit a horse at a fence yet. He has broken every bone in his skin, and I don't suppose he ever saw a good thing to a finish. He never knows whether hounds are in cover, or where they are. His only idea is to follow another man's red coat till he comes to grief;—and yet he will go on hunting. There are some people who never will understand what they can do, and what they can't." In answer to this, Archie reminded his friend that on this occasion Jack Stuart would have the advantage of an excellent dry-nurse, acknowledged to be very great on such occasions. Would not he, Archie Clavering, be there to pilot Jack Stuart and his boat? But, nevertheless, Doodles was melancholy, and went on telling stories about that unfortunate man who would continue to break his bones, though he had no aptitude for out-of-door sports. "He'll be carried home on a stretcher some day, you know," said Doodles.

"What does it matter if he is," said Archie, boldly, thinking of himself and of the danger predicted for him. "A man can only die once."

"I call it quite a tempting of Providence," said Doodles.

But their conversation was chiefly about Lady Ongar and the Spy. It was only on this day that Doodles had learned that Archie had in truth offered his hand, and been rejected; and Captain Clavering was surprised by the extent of his friend's sympathy. "It's a doosed disagreeable thing,—a very disagreeable thing indeed," said Doodles. Archie, who did not wish to be regarded as specially unfortunate, declined to look at the matter in this light; but Doodles insisted. "It would cut me up like the very mischief," he said. "I know that; and the worst of it is, that perhaps you wouldn't have gone on, only for me. I meant it all for the best, old fellow. I did, indeed. There; that's the game to you. I'm playing uncommon badly this morning; but the truth is, I'm thinking of those women," Now as Doodles was playing for a little money, this was really civil on his part.

And he would persevere in talking about the Spy, as though there were something in his remembrance of the lady which attracted him irresistibly to the subject. He had always boasted that in his interview with her he had come off with the victory, nor did he now cease to make such boasts; but still he spoke of her and her powers with an awe which would have completely opened the eyes of any one a little more sharp on such matters than Archie Clavering. He was so intent on this subject that he sent the marker out of the room so that he might discuss it with more freedom, and might plainly express his views as to her influence on his friend's fate.

"By George! she's a wonderful woman. Do you know I can't help

thinking of her at night. She keeps me awake ;—she does, upon my honour."

"I can't say she keeps me awake, but I wish I had my seventy pounds back again."

"Do you know, if I were you, I shouldn't grudge it. I should think it worth pretty nearly all the money to have had the dealing with her."

"Then you ought to go halves."

"Well, yes ;—only that I ain't flush, I would. When one thinks of it, her absolutely taking the notes out of your waistcoat-pocket, upon my word it's beautiful! She'd have had it out of mine, if I hadn't been doosed sharp."

"She understood what she was about, certainly."

"What I should like to know is this; did she or did she not tell Lady Ongar what she was to do ;—about you I mean? I daresay she did after all."

"And took my money for nothing?"

"Because you didn't go high enough, you know."

"But that was your fault. I went as high as you told me."

"No, you didn't, Clavvy; not if you remember. But the fact is, I don't suppose you could go high enough. I shouldn't be surprised if such a woman as that wanted—thousands! I shouldn't indeed. I shall never forget the way in which she swore at me ;—and how she abused me about my family. I think she must have had some special reason for disliking Warwickshire, she said such awful hard things about it."

"How did she know that you came from Warwickshire?"

"She did know it. If I tell you something don't you say anything about it. I have an idea about her."

"What is it?"

"I didn't mention it before, because I don't talk much of those sort of things. I don't pretend to understand them, and it is better to leave them alone."

"But what do you mean?"

Doodles looked very solemn as he answered. "I think she's a medium—or a media, or whatever it ought to be called."

"What! one of those spirit-rapping people?" And Archie's hair almost stood on end as he asked the question.

"They don't rap now,—not the best of them, that is. That was the old way, and seems to have been given up."

"But what do you suppose she did?"

"How did she know that the money was in your waistcoat-pocket, now? How did she know that I came from Warwickshire? And then she had a way of going about the room as though she could have raised herself off her feet in a moment if she had chosen. And then her swearing, and the rest of it,—so unlike any other woman, you know."

"But do you think she could have made Julia hate me?"

"Ah, I can't tell that. There are such lots of things going on now—

a-days that a fellow can understand nothing about! But I've no doubt of this,—if you were to tie her up with ropes ever so, I don't in the least doubt but what she'd get out."

Archie was awe-struck, and made two or three strokes after this; but then he plucked up his courage and asked a question,—

"Where do you suppose they get it from, Doodles?"

"That's just the question."

"Is it from—— the devil, do you think?" said Archie, whispering the name of the evil one in a very low voice.

"Well, yes; I suppose that's most likely."

"Because they don't seem to do a great deal of harm with it after all. As for my money, she would have had that any way, for I intended to give it to her."

"There are people who think," said Doodles, "that the spirits don't come from anywhere, but are always floating about."

"And then one person catches them, and another doesn't?" asked Archie.

"They tell me that it depends upon what the mediums or medias eat and drink," said Doodles, "and upon what sort of minds they have. They must be cleverish people, I fancy, or the spirits wouldn't come to them."

"But you never hear of any swell being a medium. Why don't the spirits go to a prime minister or some of those fellows? Only think what a help they'd be."

"If they come from the devil," suggested Doodles, "he wouldn't let them do any real good."

"I've heard a deal about them," said Archie, "and it seems to me that the mediums are always poor people, and that they come from nobody knows where. The Spy is a clever woman I daresay——"

"There isn't much doubt about that," said the admiring Doodles.

"But you can't say she's respectable, you know. If I was a spirit I wouldn't go to a woman who wore such dirty stockings as she had on."

"That's nonsense, Clavvy. What does a spirit care about a woman's stockings?"

"But why don't they ever go to the wise people? that's what I want to know." And as he asked the question boldly he struck his ball sharply, and, lo, the three balls rolled vanquished into three different pockets. "I don't believe about it," said Archie, as he readjusted the score. "The devil can't do such things as that or there'd be an end of everything; and as to spirits in the air, why should there be more spirits now than there were four-and-twenty years ago?"

"That's all very well, old fellow," said Doodles, "but you and I ain't clever enough to understand everything." Then that subject was dropped, and Doodles went back for a while to the perils of Jack Stuart's yacht.

After the lunch, which was in fact Archie's early dinner, Doodles was going to leave his friend, but Archie insisted that his brother captain



should walk with him up to Berkeley Square, and see the last of him into his cab. Doodles had suggested that Sir Hugh would be there, and that Sir Hugh was not always disposed to welcome his brother's friends to his own house after the most comfortable modes of friendship; but Archie explained that on such an occasion as this there need be no fear on that head; he and his brother were going away together, and there was a certain feeling of jollity about the trip which would divest Sir Hugh of his roughness. "And besides," said Archie, "as you will be there to see me off, he'll know that you're not going to stay yourself." Convinced by this, Doodles consented to walk up to Berkeley Square.

Sir Hugh had spent the greatest part of this day at home, immersed among his guns and rods, and their various appurtenances. He also had breakfasted at his club, but had ordered his luncheon to be prepared for him at home. He had arranged to leave Berkeley Square at four, and had directed that his lamb chops should be brought to him exactly at three. He was himself a little late in coming downstairs, and it was ten minutes past the hour when he desired that the chops might be put on the table, saying that he himself would be in the drawing-room in time to meet them. He was a man solicitous about his lamb chops, and careful that the asparagus should be hot; solicitous also as to that bottle of Lafitte by which those comestibles were to be accompanied and which was, of its own nature, too good to be shared with his brother Archie. But as he was on the landing, by the drawing-room door, descending quickly, conscious that in obedience to his orders the chops had been already served, he was met by a servant who, with disturbed face and quick voice, told him that there was a lady waiting for him in the hall.

"D—— it!" said Sir Hugh.

"She has just come, Sir Hugh, and says that she specially wants to see you."

"Why the devil did you let her in?"

"She walked in when the door was opened, Sir Hugh, and I couldn't help it. She seemed to be a lady, Sir Hugh, and I didn't like not to let her inside the door."

"What's the lady's name?" asked the master.

"It's a foreign name, Sir Hugh. She said she wouldn't keep you five minutes." The lamb chops, and the asparagus, and the Lafitte were in the dining-room, and the only way to the dining-room lay through the hall to which the foreign lady had obtained an entrance. Sir Hugh, making such calculations as the moments allowed, determined that he would face the enemy, and pass on to his banquet over her prostrate body. He went quickly down into the hall, and there was encountered by Sophie Gordeloup, who, skipping over the gun-cases, and rushing through the portmanteaus, caught the baronet by the arm before he had been able to approach the dining-room door. "Sir 'Oo," she said, "I am so glad to have caught you. You are going away, and I have things to tell you which you must hear—yes; it is well for you I have caught you, Sir 'Oo." Sir Hugh

looked as though he by no means participated in this feeling, and saying something about his great hurry begged that he might be allowed to go to his food. Then he added that, as far as his memory served him, he had not the honour of knowing the lady who was addressing him.

"You come in to your little dinner," said Sophie, "and I will tell you everything as you are eating. Don't mind me. You shall eat and drink, and I will talk. I am Madame Gordeloup,—Sophie Gordeloup. Ah,—you know the name now. Yes. That is me. Count Pateroff is my brother. You know Count Pateroff. He knowed Lord Ongar, and I knowed Lord Ongar. We know Lady Ongar. Ah,—you understand now that I can have much to tell. It is well you was not gone without seeing me? Eh; yes! You shall eat and drink, but suppose you send that man into the kitchen?"

Sir Hugh was so taken by surprise that he hardly knew how to act on the spur of the moment. He certainly had heard of Madame Gordeloup, though he had never before seen her. For years past her name had been familiar to him in London, and when Lady Ongar had returned as a widow it had been, to his thinking, one of her worst offences that this woman had been her friend. Under ordinary circumstances his judgment would have directed him to desire the servant to put her out into the street as an impostor, and to send for the police if there was any difficulty. But it certainly might be possible that this woman had something to tell with reference to Lady Ongar which it would suit his purposes to hear. At the present moment he was not very well inclined to his sister-in-law, and was disposed to hear evil of her. So he passed on into the dining-room and desired Madame Gordeloup to follow him. Then he closed the room door, and standing up with his back to the fireplace, so that he might be saved from the necessity of asking her to sit down, he declared himself ready to hear anything that his visitor might have to say.

"But you will eat your dinner, Sir 'Oo? You will not mind me. I shall not care."

"Thank you, no;—if you will just say what you have got to say, I will be obliged to you."

"But the nice things will be so cold! Why should you mind me? Nobody minds me."

"I will wait, if you please, till you have done me the honour of leaving me."

"Ah, well,—you Englishmen are so cold and ceremonious. But Lord Ongar was not with me like that. I knew Lord Ongar so well."

"Lord Ongar was more fortunate than I am."

"He was a poor man who did kill himself. Yes. It was always that bottle of Cognac. And there was other bottles was worser still. Never mind; he has gone now, and his widow has got the money. It is she has been a fortunate woman! Sir 'Oo, I will sit down here in the arm-chair." Sir Hugh made a motion with his hand, not daring to forbid her to do as she was minded. "And you, Sir 'Oo;—will not you sit down also?"

"I will continue to stand if you will allow me.

"Very well; you shall do as most pleases you. As I did walk here, and shall walk back, I will sit down."

"And now if you have anything to say, Madame Gordeloup," said Sir Hugh, looking at the silver covers which were hiding the chops and the asparagus, and looking also at his watch, "perhaps you will be good enough to say it."

"Anything to say! Yes, Sir 'Oo, I have something to say. It is a pity you will not sit at your dinner."

"I will not sit at my dinner till you have left me. So now, if you will be pleased to proceed——"

"I will proceed. Perhaps you don't know that Lord Ongar died in these arms?" And Sophie, as she spoke, stretched out her skinny hands, and put herself as far as possible into the attitude in which it would be most convenient to nurse the head of a dying man upon her bosom. Sir Hugh, thinking to himself that Lord Ongar could hardly have received much consolation in his fate from this incident, declared that he had not heard the fact before. "No; you have not heard it. She have tell nothing to her friends here. He die abroad, and she has come back with all the money; but she tell nothing to anybody here, so I must tell."

"But I don't care how he died, Madame Gordeloup. It is nothing to me."

"But yes, Sir 'Oo. The lady, your wife, is the sister to Lady Ongar. Is not that so? Lady Ongar did live with you before she was married. Is not that so? Your brother and your cousin both wishes to marry her and have all the money. Is not that so? Your brother has come to me to help him, and has sent the little man out of Warwickshire. Is not that so?"

"What the d—— is all that to me?" said Sir Hugh, who did not quite understand the story as the lady was telling it.

"I will explain, Sir 'Oo, what the d—— it is to you; only I wish you were eating the nice things on the table. This Lady Ongar is treating me very bad. She treat my brother very bad too. My brother is Count Pateroff. We have been put to—oh, such expenses for her! It have nearly ruined me. I make a journey to your London here altogether for her. Then, for her, I go down to that accursed little island;—what you call it?—where she insult me. Oh! all my time is gone. Your brother and your cousin, and the little man out of Warwickshire, all coming to my house,—just as it please them."

"But what is this to me?" shouted Sir Hugh.

"A great deal to you," screamed back Madame Gordeloup. "You see I know everything,—everything. I have got papers."

"What do I care for your papers? Look here, Madame Gordeloup, you had better go away."

"Not yet, Sir 'Oo; not yet. You are going away to Norway—I know; and I am ruined before you come back."

"Look here, madame; do you mean that you want money from me?"

"I want my rights, Sir 'Oo. Remember, I know everything;—everything; oh, such things! If they were all known,—in the newspapers, you understand, or that kind of thing, that lady in Bolton Street would lose all her money to-morrow. Yes. There is uncles to the little lord; yes! Ah, how much would they give me, I wonder? They would not tell me to go away."

Sophie was perhaps justified in the estimate she had made of Sir Hugh's probable character from the knowledge which she had acquired of his brother Archie; but, nevertheless, she had fallen into a great mistake. There could hardly have been a man then in London less likely to fall into her present views than Sir Hugh Clavering. Not only was he too fond of his money to give it away without knowing why he did so; but he was subject to none of that weakness by which some men are prompted to submit to such extortions. Had he believed her story, and had Lady Ongar been really dear to him, he would never have dealt with such a one as Madame Gordeloup otherwise than through the police.

"Madame Gordeloup," said he, "if you don't immediately take yourself off, I shall have you put out of the house."

He would have sent for a constable at once, had he not feared that by doing so, he would retard his journey.

"What!" said Sophie, whose courage was as good as his own. "Me put out of the house! Who shall touch me?"

"My servant shall; or if that will not do, the police. Come, walk." And he stepped over towards her as though he himself intended to assist in her expulsion by violence.

"Well, you are there; I see you; and what next?" said Sophie. "You, and your walk! I can tell you things fit for you to know, and you say, Walk. If I walk, I will walk to some purpose. I do not often walk for nothing when I am told—Walk!" Upon this, Sir Hugh rang the bell with some violence. "I care nothing for your bells, or for your servants, or for your policemen. I have told you that your sister owe me a great deal of money, and you say,—Walk. I will walk." Thereupon the servant came into the room, and Sir Hugh, in an angry voice, desired him to open the front door. "Yes,—open wide," said Sophie, who, when anger came upon her, was apt to drop into a mode of speaking English which she was able to avoid in her cooler moments. "Sir 'Oo, I am going to walk, and you shall hear of my walking."

"Am I to take that as a threat?" said he.

"Not a tret at all," said she; "only a promise. Ah, I am good to keep my promises! Yes, I make a promise. Your poor wife,—down with the daises; I know all, and she shall hear too. That is another promise. And your brother, the captain. Oh! here he is, and the little man out of Warwickshire." She had got up from her chair, and had moved towards the door with the intention of going; but just as she was passing out into the hall, she encountered Archie and Doodles. Sir Hugh, who had been

altogether at a loss to understand what she had meant by the man out of Warwickshire, followed her into the hall, and became more angry than before at finding that his brother had brought a friend to his house at so very inopportune a moment. The wrath in his face was so plainly expressed that Doodles could perceive it, and wished himself away. The presence also of the Spy was not pleasant to the gallant captain. Was the wonderful woman ubiquitous, that he should thus encounter her again, and that so soon after all the things that he had spoken of her on this morning? "How do you do, gentlemen?" said Sophie. "There is a great many boxes here, and I with my crinoline have not got room." Then she shook hands, first with Archie, and then with Doodles; and asked the latter why he was not as yet gone to Warwickshire. Archie, in almost mortal fear, looked up into his brother's face. Had his brother learned the story of that seventy pounds? Sir Hugh was puzzled beyond measure at finding that the woman knew the two men; but having still an eye to his lamb chops, was chiefly anxious to get rid of Sophie and Doodles together.

"This is my friend Boodle,—Captain Boodle," said Archie, trying to put a bold face upon the crisis. "He has come to see me off."

"Very kind of him," said Sir Hugh. "Just make way for this lady, will you? I want to get her out of the house if I can. Your friend seems to know her; perhaps he'll be good enough to give her his arm?"

"Who;—I?" said Doodles. "No; I don't know her particularly. I did meet her once before, just once,—in a casual way."

"Captain Boodle and me is very good friends," said Sophie. "He come to my house and behave himself very well; only he is not so handy a man as your brother, Sir 'Oo."

Archie trembled, and he trembled still more when his brother, turning to him, asked him if he knew the woman.

"Yes; he know the woman very well," said Sophie. "Why do you not come any more to see me? You send your little friend; but I like you better yourself. You come again when you return, and all that shall be made right."

But still she did not go. She had now seated herself on a gun-case which was resting on a portmanteau, and seemed to be at her ease. The time was going fast, and Sir Hugh, if he meant to eat his chops, must eat them at once.

"See her out of the hall, into the street," he said to Archie; "and if she gives trouble, send for the police. She has come here to get money from me by threats, and only that we have no time, I would have her taken to the lock-up house at once." Then Sir Hugh retreated into the dining-room and shut the door.

"Lock-up-cuse!" said Sophie, scornfully. "What is dat?"

"He means a prison," said Doodles.

"Prison! I know who is most likely be in a prison. Tell me of a prison! Is he a minister of state that he can send out order for me to be

made prisoner? Is there lettres de cachet now in England? I think not. Prison, indeed!"

"But really, Madame Gordeloup, you had better go; you had, indeed," said Archie.

"You, too—you bid me go? Did I bid you go when you came to me? Did I not tell you, sit down? Was I not polite? Did I send for a police? or talk of lock-up-ouse to you? No. It is English that do these things; only English."

Archie felt that it was incumbent on him to explain that his visit to her house had been made under other circumstances,—that he had brought money instead of seeking it; and had, in fact, gone to her simply in the way of her own trade. He did begin some preliminaries to this explanation; but as the servant was there, and as his brother might come out from the dining-room,—and as also he was aware that he could hardly tell the story much to his own advantage, he stopped abruptly, and, looking piteously at Doodles, implored him to take the lady away.

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind just seeing her into Mount Street," said Archie.

"Who; I?" said Doodles, electrified.

"It is only just round the corner," said Archie.

"Yes, Captain Booddle, we will go," said Sophie. "This is a bad house; and your Sir 'Oo,—I do not like him at all. Lock-up, indeed! I tell you he shall very soon be locked up himself. There is what you call Davy's locker. I know;—yes."

Doodles also trembled when he heard this anathema, and thought once more of the character of Jack Stuart and his yacht.

"Pray go with her," said Archie.

"But I had come to see you off."

"Never mind," said Archie. "He is in such a taking, you know. God bless you, old fellow; good-by! I'll write and tell you what fish we get, and mind you tell me what Turriper does for the Bedfordshire. Good-by, Madame Gordeloup—good-by."

There was no escape for him, so Doodles put on his hat and prepared to walk away to Mount Street with the Spy under his arm,—the Spy as to whose avocations, over and beyond those of her diplomatic profession, he had such strong suspicions! He felt inclined to be angry with his friend, but the circumstances of his parting hardly admitted of any expression of anger.

"Good-by, Clavvy," he said. "Yes; I'll write; that is, if I've got anything to say."

"Take care of yourself, captain," said Sophie.

"All right," said Archie.

"Mind you come and see me when you come back," said Sophie.

"Of course I will," said Archie.

"And we'll make that all right for you yet. Gentlemen, when they have so much to gain, shouldn't take a No too easy. You come with your

handy glove, and we'll see about it again." Then Sophie walked off leaning upon the arm of Captain Boodle, and Archie stood at the door watching them till they turned out of sight round the corner of the square. At last he saw them no more, and then he returned to his brother.

And as we shall see Doodles no more,—or almost no more,—we will now bid him adieu civilly. The pair were not ill-matched, though the lady perhaps had some advantage in acuteness, given to her no doubt by the experience of a longer life. Doodles, as he walked along two sides of the square with the fair burden on his arm, felt himself to be in some sort proud of his position, though it was one from which he would not have been sorry to escape, had escape been possible. A remarkable phenomenon was the Spy, and to have walked round Berkeley Square with such a woman leaning on his arm, might in coming years be an event to remember with satisfaction. In the meantime he did not say much to her, and did not quite understand all that she said to him. At last he came to the door which he well remembered, and then he paused. He did not escape even then. After a while the door was opened, and those who were passing might have seen Captain Boodle, slowly and with hesitating steps, enter the narrow passage before the lady. Then Sophie followed, and closed the door behind her. As far as this story goes, what took place at that interview cannot be known. Let us bid farewell to Doodles, and wish him a happy escape.

"How did you come to know that woman?" said Hugh to his brother, as soon as Archie was in the dining-room.

"She was a friend of Julia's," said Archie.

"You haven't given her money?" Hugh asked.

"O dear, no," said Archie.

Immediately after that they got into their cab; the things were pitched on the top; and,—for a while,—we may bid adieu to them also.



## The Old English Chroniclers.

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A FAMILIAR phenomenon in the eyes of all students of literary history is the play of action and reaction, ebb and flow, in the course of the literature of every country. There is a certain sense in which progress may be recognized there, just as in the social condition of a nation; but it by no means follows from this, that what is written in each age is an advance on what has been written by the age before. On the contrary, intervals occur, during which little is doing of any excellence; and when these pass over, the revival often takes the form of a restoration. The new men of genius revolt against their immediate predecessors, and recur to the study of predecessors long gone by. This is peculiarly true of the English, and is in harmony with their action in the cognate world of political life. The patriots who first moved against Charles the First, did not want to make a new England or a new English monarchy, but to restore what they believed the old to have been, and to save the kingdom from becoming what, by an undue triumph over the best elements of the feudal system, the Continental kingdoms had become.

Among literary movements of a similar character, that in which we are interested on the present occasion is the awakened love for things mediæval and feudal which is now nearly a hundred years old. It is astonishing how little the most characteristic men of the eighteenth century cared for anything that was older than the revival of learning, or, indeed, for much of the highest value that was considerably later. Johnson edited Shakspeare without hardly troubling himself to look at any other Elizabethan dramatist. Dante was spoken of as a "whimsical" writer. Chaucer was neglected as—to use the words which Cowley had applied to him—"a dry old-fashioned wit." Bacon was modernized; Bunyan was sneered at,—one of the sneerers being Addison; Gray, though a feudal, hardly less than a classical scholar, called the age of Froissart barbarous; and Walpole, though he dabbled in our old history, dabbled in it always in an essentially modern spirit,—diving into its mud (as he thought it) like the divers into the wreck of the *Royal George*, and making epigrammatic snuff-boxes and chimney-ornaments out of what he brought up. This general tendency amongst men of letters was partly due, no doubt, to the prodigious effect produced by the consummate ability of those typical moderns, the Queen Anne men; who, again, had been acted on by the not unnatural sway of the Roman and Greek literature. But the same spirit ran through all life,—from which literature ought never to be viewed apart. Men of family sneered at tradition, and, in spite of their ancient coat-armour, held heraldry in

contempt. All antiquities were neglected. Everybody building in a country place helped himself to the ruins of the nearest castle or abbey. Pipes were lighted with wills of the fourteenth century; and fowls singed with the correspondence of men who had roamed with Raleigh or fought with Rupert. Here and there, indeed, solitary students, such as Hearne, or learned historical inquirers like the Rymers and Cartes, went on with their labours amongst the relics of the past. But if the world ever heard of these men it heard of them in a satirical epigram, and they were known to, and respected by only the few. When the tide turned, it flowed very slowly. Bishop Percy's labours, we suspect, were not a little inspired by his interest in his own Percy ancestry so conspicuously celebrated in the ballads; and good modern philologers of our day, like Mr. Furnival, are astonished at the liberties he took with his material. Nevertheless the tide *had* turned, and it was flowing. And when the great literary revival of the end of the century began, hardly a writer, however otherwise modern in spirit, but showed the influence of antique associations. Wordsworth celebrated the old Cliffords in one poem. The *Ancient Mariner* was suggested to Coleridge by the old books of travel. Byron began *Childe Harold* by imitating Spenser. Keats drew the subject of one of his most charming poems from Boccaccio. Lamb nourished his humour on Fuller and Browne. And they all, or nearly all, recurred with love to ballads and old plays, to old translations like Chapman's, to Shakspeare, and Chaucer: subjects which interested the whole group, much more than they had ever interested—we don't say Thomson or Collins only—but Dryden, Otway, or Cowley. As for Scott, true to the instinct of the little country, then curiously separated from England, which in some respects was the most feudal country left in Western Europe,—*he* plunged into the new-old element, heart and soul. Hardly, in the course of a life devoted to composition, did he ever attempt to describe his contemporaries. All the wine of his genius was in jars bearing the name of ancient consuls. It was from him more than any of that illustrious band that the age received its antiquarian impress, and that impress was in due time found on many works that were not works of imagination only. *Ivanhoe* has been censured for inaccuracy of detail by Sir Francis Palgrave; but it was in Scott's own spirit that that valuable historian was working when he produced his *Merchant and Friar*; and there can be little doubt, we apprehend, that the vivid juxtaposition of Norman and Saxon in *Ivanhoe* gave birth to the whole view of Thierry,—so mistaken in some respects,—but so brilliantly and effectively expressed in his *Conquest*. As for Scott's influence otherwise, it told on the whole literature of Europe, and on the kindred arts everywhere. The neglect of the Middle Ages had been universal, and the interest in them became universal. There were new translations of Froissart, new investigations of architecture, art, armour, heraldry, costume, sports, folk-lore; and, as one important consequence, there was everywhere a fresh sentiment of nationality. For, the living many-hued

presentation of the life of their common ancestors in the pages of Scott, and of those whom he influenced, naturally awakened a fresh sense of kinsmanship in the people of each country.

We may venture, accordingly, to say that modern Europe never derived so much historical interest, so much poetical enjoyment, from the traditions of its own ancestors, as it has done since the present century opened; at all events not until we ascend beyond the period when the ancients came to life again, nearly four hundred years ago. It was the natural effect of that memorable event to throw the intellectual home-growth of modern Europe into comparative obscurity. The great sixteenth-century men seem never to have believed that they or their contemporaries could produce anything worth reading. Doubts on the subject are clearly visible in Montaigne, who was as much a child of Plutarch and Seneca as of France. Erasmus apologizes for writing to a merchant of Lubeck in Latin, on the ground that he did not know, or had forgotten, German. Buchanan speaks of his works as requiring the apology of having been produced under a Northern heaven, and in an unlearned age. This feeling lasted long, and prevailed everywhere. It is the real explanation of the little that we know of Shakspeare. The contemporaries of Shakspeare admired his powers, and rewarded them; but we were not yet familiar with the idea that immortality might be won by a modern; and we have abundant materials for the biography of those men of Shakspeare's age who devoted themselves to the classics. There are plenty of letters extant, for instance, which Isaac Casaubon wrote from London during the later years of Shakspeare's life; and it has a strange effect to read them, and to find no hint that he had ever heard of Shakspeare's existence; or that he passed bookstalls every day on which were ballads for sale that future scholars would use for the illustration of Homer and Livy. But if you had stopped the good Isaac,—one of the best and most learned of the children of men,—on his way westward from his house in St. Mary Axe, and told him that a greater than Sophocles was to be seen in London streets, he would have thought you an indisputable maniac, and would have muttered something from Horace and Juvenal about "hellebore" and "opening the middle vein." All this is changed now; and has changed more rapidly during the last fifty years than in the hundred years preceding. The pine rears its head in rivalry of the olive; and the Scandinavian ale disputes precedence with the Wolf's milk. The classic man in his garland is confronted with the feudal man in his mail; and the return of a crusader, wounded at Antioch, affects the imagination of Europe as much as that of a well-greaved Achæan from the labours of Troy. Mr. Carlyle founds a book on the life of a twelfth-century monk; Mr. Tennyson a series of poems on the Mort d'Arthur; Mr. Dasent and Dr. Carlyle study the Norse Sagas; Lord Lindsay and Mr. Ruskin the masterpieces of Christian art. That all this is a reaction after, and in some degree against, classicism, is no doubt true. But this is far from being the only important feature of it. It is a most valuable appeal to the poetry and sentiment of

our own heroic and faithful ages against the tyranny of mere mechanism and industrialism, and it also helps to elevate and refine these. Meanwhile it has no deep quarrel with classicism after all ; for the subjects are capable of being made to illustrate each other. We owe some of Shakspeare's finest plays to his wise and genial study of the wise and genial Plutarch. Nor is it right, however true and convenient it may be to speak of the *revival* of learning, to speak of it as if the classical literature had ever been *dead*. The Latin language has never been dead, and will die as hard as the Latin wolf,—

. . biting hard  
Amidst the dying hounds.

It was pre-eminently the language of mediæval history as of the mediæval church. The chroniclers quote Lucan, and Ovid, and Horace ; the Walter Mapes poets know their Juvenal well. The old fire was still always smouldering half alive under the mighty ashes of the barbarian invasions ; and the scattered Greeks of the fifteenth century, if they brought new fuel, still found no cold hearth, and no hostile atmosphere. Indeed it may be reserved for the criticism of the future to show that the history of Europe is one ; that those old Greeks and Italians were our cousins less far removed than we suppose ; and that the explanation of our sympathy with Homer, Aristotle, and Sophocles ; Horace, Cicero, and Tacitus ; is nothing but the natural sympathy of early relationship and kindred blood.

The chroniclers, we have said, quote now and then the Latin poets, and this brings us to our more immediate object in the present paper. Of all classes of writers, the chroniclers are naturally least read, and for very sufficient reasons. They are at once Latin writers, without being classical, and modern writers, without being amusing after the modern fashion. A general reader may keep up his Virgil, or bestow the reasonable though moderate trouble necessary to make him relish his Chaucer or Montaigne. But the chances are a hundred to one against his ever meddling with Dudo of St. Quentin, William of Poitou, or the long line of the historians whom we commonly call chroniclers, from these men to Matthew Paris, and from Matthew Paris to Froissart. Their world is another world ; their language another language. They are much more removed from the modern spirit than Cicero or Horace, who lived in a civilization corresponding in its development to that which we have reached. Yet they are our men—our countrymen—the sources of our early history ; and we ought to know something about them. They were born either in that Normandy which was one of the cradles of our race, or in broad England itself. They spent their lives in our monasteries and churches, living and dying in hope of England's welfare, and employed in toil for the sake of England's future generations. We ought to have some conception of what they did, and from what point of view, just as we have of the Johnsons and Goldsmiths of the last age ; and even an imperfect conception will be better

than none at all, provided only that it be an honest and sound one as far as it goes. Let us glance at their general work, general character, and features, serious and comic; taking them not individually and in detail, but as a group, which, though distributed over many generations, had yet a common type of faith, knowledge, style, and taste, as distinct from the faith, knowledge, style, and taste of the modern, civilized, accomplished, industrial, non-feudal, non-Catholic world in which we live.

As for our obligation to the chroniclers, in the widest sense, from the compilers of the Saxon Chronicle, downwards—for instance, to Florence of Worcester, John Bromton, Henry of Huntingdon, William of Malmesbury, and Vinsauf, of the twelfth century; and Roger Hoveden, Roger of Wendover, and Matthew Paris, of the thirteenth—it practically amounts to this, that they are the main sources of our knowledge of the events of those epochs. They may be checked or confirmed by such State papers as have survived; but what we know of the life of the country in those remote times is altogether derived from them. The commonplaces of popular knowledge,—Rollo's capsizing the French king, Alfred and the story of the cakes, Godiva's ride through Coventry, Canute and the waves,—all these are simply the anecdotes which they use as garnish, and which fly through the world without the world's caring who were the first narrators of them. It is a common notion that such legends—not necessarily untrue by any means—form the main staple of chronicles; but this is a mistake. The mediæval chronicler was simply the man of letters of his age; a churchman generally, because the Church was the home of all the speculative intellect and book-knowledge of the time; but still substantially the representative of our Merivales and Grotes. He had good materials,—first, the recorded narratives of his predecessors; and next, the personal conversation of the best informed of his contemporaries. He worked away in the *scriptorium* of the religious house to which he belonged, using the advice and assistance of the brothers of his fraternity. But those religious houses played the part of friendly hotels or inns for travellers, rich or poor; and the rich traveller paid not ignobly for his lampreys, pasty, Greek wine, and lodging, by stretching out his stout legs at the huge wood fire, and telling the good brothers all the news. If he had been to Palestine, so much the better for him and for them; and in any case, he was able to communicate not only all he had seen himself, but all he had heard and picked up in his wanderings from other chevaliers leading the same active and stirring life as his own. The head of the house, too, if he was a mitred abbot, attended the King's Councils, and afterwards his Parliaments, to be consulted *circa ardua regni*, with the *proceres*, *comites*, or *magnates* of the realm. A chronicle, then, produced at one of the great seats of the religious orders represented much more than the knowledge and experience of the individual chronicler. His mind was present in it like a flavour, but the dish was virtually the work of many hands. The Saxon Chronicle is the result of more elements than can be separated from each other with certainty, like the Chronicle of

Melrose, and many others. But in those which bear the names, and reflect the character of single authors, we find an amount of knowledge which no single author could have accumulated by himself.

The chronicles, accordingly, became the regular fountains of mediæval history; and their writers formed a chain, which quoted and borrowed from each other, and continued each other's work through different centuries, forming a *catena historicorum*, as the Fathers form a *catena Patrum*. After the monasteries were broken up, their MSS. got ultimately dispersed into various libraries, and into private collections, of which the most famous for its antiquarian value was that of Sir Robert Cotton, a store-house to which his friends Sir John Eliot, Selden, and other patriots resorted for precedents in their noble struggle—a struggle essentially *historical* in its inspiration—against Charles the First. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some of the most important chronicles were printed in those sober folios of Duchesne, Sir Henry Savile, Twysden, and others, which look so stately on the shelves of libraries. Duchesne edited the Norman chronicles, containing the whole story of the Dukedom, from the days of Rollo to the days of William—his descendant in the fifth degree. The historians of the Crusades were collected in the celebrated work *Gesta Dei per Francos*. Jortin, once so well known, and still somewhat remembered for a *Life of Erasmus*, which is useful, though unsatisfactory as a whole, nicknamed this collection *Gesta DIABOLI per Francos*—a good joke, which Gibbon enjoyed, but which, in its want of sympathy with the Middle Ages, is eighteenth century all over. From these early editions of the chronicles our first modern histories were drawn; and they were of great use to Dugdale in his learned *Baronage* (the foundation of all sound genealogy), and elsewhere. The modern historian whose original study of them has been of most consequence to the world, was Thomas Carte, the Jacobite of the early part of last century, a most worthy, excellent man, whatever may be thought of his opinions, a writer of profound research, devoted to the cause of the English monarchy, but not given to shirking the truth when a bad monarch—like John, for example—is to be dealt with. It is a rather humiliating thing to reflect upon, that “Thomas Carte, an Englishman,” as he calls himself on his title-page, is in our days of “reading made easy” hardly ever opened at all. But nothing can be more natural. His warmest admirers, of whom Mr. Edgar, the author of the excellent histories for boys, was one of the last, cannot pretend that Carte is entertaining; but his folios were always at the elbow of a certain most sagacious Scottish gentleman, who lived just after him, named David Hume; and to him nature had given, besides one of the subtlest of philosophical intellects, a gift that by no means always accompanies that—the gift of a most easy, graceful, winning style, which flows along as clearly and freely as the Tweed flows along the borders of his native county. Great seem to have been the obligations of Hume to the materials of Carte; but he dealt with them as the conjuror deals with the

object which he borrows from one of his audience. He reproduced them in superior forms, and showered the results all abroad. His powers of generalization, his insight of all kinds, were infinitely superior to Carte's; and as for his English, Carte's English is to Hume's what worsted is to silk. But what we have specially to remark is, that both men were indebted to the chroniclers. When we read them,—as when we read Lingard or Sir Francis Palgrave,—we are still communicating with the good old monks, whether of St. Alban's, Peterborough, Melrose, or elsewhere; whose names and works are as green as ever. The English Historical Society and similar bodies have re-edited them in our time; and they are still being re-edited in the Government series. French translations of them have been made under high patronage; for the French, as in the notable case of our Civil War memoirs, have (thanks to men of the stamp of the illustrious Guizot) done much service to British historical studies. The English translations in Mr. Bohn's Antiquarian Library, though not proof in every part of their plating against the heavy artillery of the *Saturday Review*, deserve a good word from all who care for such subjects, as readable, portable, pleasant representatives of the often obscure originals. A reader engaged in detailed research, a historical writer or critic, will, of course, take care to consult the originals in their best texts. But for general purposes, the labours of Dr. Giles, Mr. Riley, and their colleagues, are sufficient; and it would be a wise thing for "the general reader" to take a good deal of his history even in that form, so that he might see past ages face to face, were it only through a glass, rather than trust to those echoes of echoes, those hashings-up of other people's philosophy, with which our commonplace histories abound. For it is better to read *in* ancient times than *about* them; just as it is better, instead of reading *about* ancient writers, to read the ancient writers themselves. We venture to say, for instance, that a good vigorous prose translation, as nearly literal as possible, would give the intelligent mechanic or aspiring clerk a better notion of Homer, than any amount of articles upon him.

It has been pointed out that the old chroniclers, however unlike modern historians, are yet essentially historians, and are the original authorities for early English history. The remark is by no means superfluous, when we remember that so able and well-read a man as Mr. Buckle took the wildest parts of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and laid them before the world as fair samples of the historic writing of the middle ages. Now, of the miraculous and legendary in the chroniclers—as we shall see presently—there is no end. *Gulliver's Travels* are a joke compared with much that they tell us. But for that very reason, let us do all the more justice to them when they show wisdom, observation, common sense, and humour. And the truth is that they constantly *do* show these when they are speaking of the world which they personally know. Dean Dudo of St. Quentin, for example, the earliest Norman chronicler, who lived in the time of Rollo's grandson, tells us strange stories about Rollo's dreams. According to the



Dean, Rou had miraculous visions of his future conversion to Christianity at the time when he was still a piratical rover, eager for hard cash, and not perhaps incapable of roasting a French or Saxon bishop. But ask Dudo what kind of a civil ruler Rollo made, or how he behaved himself after he had acquired Normandy, and the Dean will give you as practical an answer as *The Times* newspaper could. He will tell you that he encouraged church-building, and agriculture, and suppressed disorder. In fact, we know the characters of those princes and rulers entirely through the power of the chroniclers to seize characteristic points. They will declare that William the Conqueror was stern; that he would not bear opposition; that he was passionately fond of the chase. But they will add that the invasion was admirably organized; that the Conqueror was just between man and man, and kept such order in England that "a girl might go laden with gold from end to end of it;" that he was mild and kindly to ecclesiastics, and that his laws protected the chastity of the poor female serf. And so with monarch after monarch, nay with princes who never succeeded to thrones, like Courthose, of whom it is possible to form as vivid a conception as one has of Prince Frederick, the heir of George the Second, or Prince Henry, the heir of James the First. His daring and humour; his talent for leading, and his want of talent for governing; his natural good sense useful to everybody but himself; the extravagance which on some occasions compelled him to lie in bed in Rouen, till the hose, so famous for their brevity, were repaired—all this is brought before us with thorough vividness by Ordericus Vitalis and Malmesbury, who perfectly appreciated the lights, shadows, and salient points of the character. Or, take William of Poitou's account of the details of the great invasion of 1066. (Duchesne's *Hist. Norm. Script.*, p. 197, seq.) He tells us that the Conqueror gathered together his invading army at St. Valery, in such order and discipline, that no private property was interfered with, but "the flocks of the country people fed in peace." He is careful to mention that some of the force having been drowned there, the bodies were buried at night to prevent alarms. The most "philosophical" of modern historians could not better select the facts necessary to enable one to judge of the degree of civilization attained, the degree of prudence exerted, by those old warriors. In the same way Florence of Worcester notes that the Normans were "very ambitious of future renown;" and Malmesbury observes it as peculiar to them that "they marry with their vassals;"—two most significant characteristics, and exactly such as a philosopher of our age studying them is glad to learn. The natural inference seems that the chroniclers were men of sense and observation, like our own best writers; that with a child-like simplicity of soul, as to all that related to the invisible or super-sensual world, they combined a manly sagacity and penetrating insight into the world of every-day life.

While we are engaged on the question of the literary power of the chroniclers, nothing at once strikes us as more worthy of remark than

their eye for the picturesque,—for colour, dramatic incident, and affecting sentiment,—for the scenery as well as the action of the great theatre of human existence. Thus, William of Poitou takes care to narrate that when, after the calm which delayed the sailing of the Norman fleet, the wind arose, it was hailed with a shout and with up-raised hands. Wace, the author of the *Roman de Rou*, describes the Conqueror's jumping into the saddle of his Spanish horse all clad in armour on the morning of the battle of Hastings, without help of any kind, amidst the applause of the surrounding knights, and describes, too, how, when the fight was done, they gathered round him to look with admiration on the dints made by many a blow upon his helmet and shield. We learn from William of Newbury whom Hearne edited, that after Saladin had recovered the Holy City from the Christians, he purified the temple with rose-water (*aqua rosea*), and silenced all bells (bells were essentially Christian,) wherever his power extended. Naturally, the chroniclers of the Crusades have no lack of startling and brilliant details. Courthose, during the First Crusade, clove a pagan to the middle with the terrible exclamation, "I commend your soul to all the devils of hell!" The Archbishop of Aix relates how, in the march across the Burnt Phrygia, the hawks died on their masters' wrists, and the dogs at their feet; how the Saracens hung up at their tent doors the heads of those whom they had slain,—with many curious stories of the same kind. When we come to the later crusade of Richard, we find him the centre figure of many a picture, the colours and figures of which have been borrowed for romance and song. In his favourite galley *Trench-the-Mer*, he sent a Turkish vessel to the bottom of the sea after a sharp sea-fight,—the first at which a King of England had been present since the days of Alfred. When he captured Cyprus, he fettered the ruler, whom he deposed, with *silver* chains. The acquisition of that island gave a spur to the joy with which he was received by the armies before Acre in the Pentecost week of 1191,—a joy thus characteristically described by one of the old writers under review:—

The very calmness of the night was thought to smile upon them with a purer air; the trumpets clanged, horns sounded, and the shrill intonations of the pipe, and the deeper notes of the timbrel and harp, struck upon the ear; and soothing sympathies were heard like various voices blended in one; and there was not a man who did not, after his own fashion, indulge in joy and praise, either singing popular ballads, to testify the gladness of his heart, or reciting the deeds of the ancients stimulating by their example the spirit of the moderns. Some drank wine from costly cups to the health of the singers, while others mixing together, high and low, passed the night in constant dances. . . . As a further proof of the exultation of their hearts, and to illumine the darkness of the night, wax torches and flaming lights sparkled in profusion, so that night seemed to be usurped by the brightness of day, and the Turks thought the whole valley was on fire.\*

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\* Geoffrey de Vinsauf (or Richard the Canon?—see Wright's *Biog. Lit.*, p. 415), in the Bohn Library.

In Lord Lindsay's pleasant *Letters from the Holy Land*, after he has been talking of Acre and Ibrahim Pasha's doings there, he not unnaturally breaks out with,—“Ibrahim Pasha! Why not a sigh for the olden time, when the standard of England streamed from St. George's Mount, and the chivalry lay encamped around it, and the young knights stood and listened to Blondel's lay!” The recollection of this pretty little crusading picture makes us say a word of the more poetical of the traditions about Cœur de Lion,—traditions so characteristic of that old literature. Who does not remember how Mr. Tennyson has embodied one of them?—

What can it matter, Margaret,  
What songs below the waning stars  
The Lion-Heart Plantagenet  
Sang, looking through his prison-bars?

It was in prison that Blondel found him, and made himself known to him by playing an air that he loved on the harp. And this story about Blondel is, as Mr. Wright has remarked, not later than the thirteenth century. But, if we owe to the chroniclers so much beautiful matter of sentiment, they were, also, far too healthy and natural men not to rejoice equally in hard fact and in jolly humour. Accordingly, we have always liked a passage in Wendover (who died in 1237), which shows that the prison-life of Richard had an exceedingly comic and homely side. “To others,” says the chronicler, “I leave the relation of his jokes to his guards, how he made them drunk, and assaulted their huge persons by way of amusement.”—(Dr. Giles's *Wendover*, ii. 127.) A cynic may think that this makes an end of the Blondel story; a sentimentalist may be shocked by it. But both would be wrong, for the essence of those primeval days was the heartiness with which men threw themselves into everything,—passing from blood to wine, from tears to jollity, with a fierceness at once spiritual and animal. Another illustration of the way in which legend and plain prose exist side by side with each other about the same persons and events, is furnished by the epoch which produced Richard. Here again Mr. Tennyson, with his fine eye for true poetic material, has been at work. We mean in the passage of his *Dream of Fair Women* where he deals with Rosamond Clifford and the “dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor.” That Eleanor hated Rosamond and poisoned her, is a standing article in mediæval mythology. We are glad, then, to know that her Majesty was a good Christian woman. For it is certain that, at one period of her life, she made interest with the Pope on behalf of a son of Rosamond's by Henry—Geoffrey, Archbishop of York—who led a life of much trouble and controversy, and at last died in exile in John's reign. The Rosamond attachment was, indeed, a boyish love of King Henry's, and it would have been well for Queen Eleanor, if her husband had only had *that* sin on his conscience.

But to return for a moment to the descriptive powers of the chroniclers.

A good specimen of it is the sketch of Sir James Douglas, called the Good Sir James, in the *Bruce* of Archdeacon Barbour:—

In visage was he some deal gray,  
And had black hair, as I heard say;  
But then of limbs he was well made,  
With bones great, and shoulders braid.  
When he was blythe he was leuzie,  
And meek and sweet in company;  
But who in battle might him see,  
Another countenance had he!

Barbour adds that Sir James had a lisp, which became him "wondrous weel;" which may remind classical scholars of Alcibiades, whose *τραυλίσμος* the Athenians rather liked than otherwise. The chroniclers love all such details of portraiture, whether in dealing with persons or things; not from conscious artistic feeling (though to use them required artistic power,) so much as from the healthy appetite for reality and exact representation proper to the social stage which they had reached. And it is well worthy of remark, that what they did from instinct we are at this very day doing deliberately in the full light of modern culture. Nothing is more significant about our present historical literature than its constant effort to reproduce past times with all their accessories of incident, costume, character, and colour; and it is curious to compare the success attained in this way with that which was sufficient to make a writer of history remarkable in the generation of our great-grandfathers. Dr. Johnson said of Lord Hailes, the founder of critical modern Scottish history, that though his book had not "the painted style now in fashion," there was an accuracy of dates and a punctuality of citation about it, which would always make it valuable. But what is the mere pictorial force of the men Johnson was thinking of—Hume, Robertson, or Gibbon—to that of, say, Mr. Carlyle? What was that of the inferior men to the same power exercised by Lord Macaulay or Mr. Froude—not to meddle with the Frenchmen, like Thierry or Michelet? It has now become a commonplace, and one which tends to be abused, that history ought not to be written only by antiquaries; or, to borrow the hackneyed epithet so often borrowed through Carlyle from Scott, by "Dryasdust." Well, all the movement which takes shape in this demand, and voice in this language, is only an attempt to recur by the help of theory to what was the unconscious practice of the chroniclers. They, guided only by their natural impulse towards full and lively expression, anticipated this modern want; and with their own fresh and, so to speak, infantine *naïveté*, transferred to their pages the life of their times as a whole. They give the conversations of their heroes as they would be given in a play; describe their persons; repeat little anecdotes of them; and go into sketches of their private lives and habits, which modern taste does not like, but which gratify the same human craving for personal knowledge of memorable people which modern taste takes care to get provided for it in its own fashion.

The success of the chroniclers in achieving this familiar kind of description, is partly owing to a quaint, old-worldly humour, which, if occasionally puerile, is on the whole by no means feeble. Roger of Wendover, already quoted, in giving what we are sorry to say is a grossly prejudiced and false account of the prophet Mahomet, dryly observes :—"Moreover, he declared that pleasures and carnal delights are the chief good; wherefore I believe that, were he living at this day, he would find many disciples." (Giles's *Wendover*, i. 74.) Roger de Hoveden, a Yorkshireman, who was a clerk or secretary to Henry the Second, deals in the following style with Longchamp, the Bishop of Ely—Cœur de Lion's unpopular chancellor :—

All the sons of the nobles acted as his servants, with downcast looks, nor dared they to look upwards towards the heavens, unless it so happened that they were addressing him; and if they attended to anything else they were pricked with a goad, which their lord held in his hand, fully mindful of his grandfather of pious memory, who, being of servile condition in the district of Beauvais, had, for his occupation, to guide the plough and whip up the oxen; and who at length, to gain his liberty, fled to the Norman territory.\*

The same Roger de Hoveden, referring elsewhere to the prevalent belief that "the old dragon"—which he tells us "is the same as the Devil and Satan"—was to be let loose (A.D. 1201), observes :—"If he did so much harm to the world while he was bound, what will he do when he is set free?—(*Quod si Diabolus ligatus tot et tanta intulerit mala mundo, quot et quanta inferet solutus?*)"—There is a palpable undercurrent of sarcasm here, and nothing can be more natural than a little pleasantry on such subjects, as a rebound after the intense and indeed awful earnestness with which they were regarded in that era. But we do not require the rollicking fun even of the poems attributed to Walter Map, or Mapes, with their—

Mihi est propositum in tabernâ mori,

so cleverly translated by Leigh Hunt, to prove to us that as there were heroes before Agamemnon, so there were wits before Rabelais and Erasmus, and that the twelfth century, in spite of its superstitions and barbarisms, and all the rest of it, was not destitute of them. Let us take an anecdote from the well-known Giraldus Cambrensis of Henry the Second's time, Archdeacon of Brecknock, a member of the great Norman house of Barri, and nearly related to the conquerors of Ireland. Giraldus, in arguing with the Archbishop of Cashel, took occasion to remind him that no one in the kingdom of Ireland had ever obtained the crown of martyrdom. "Upon this," he goes on, "the archbishop replied sarcastically, avoiding the point of my proposition and answering it by a home-thrust. 'It is true,' he said, 'that although our nation may seem barbarous, uncivilized, and cruel, they have always

\* RILEY's *Hoveden*, ii. 232.

shown great honour and reverence to their ecclesiastics, and never on any occasion raised their hands against God's saints. But there is now come into our land a people who know how to make martyrs, and have frequently done it. Henceforth Ireland will have its martyrs as well as other countries.' " \* The sting here is forked ; for the first part of the archbishop's reply obviously refers to the slaughter of Becket. As for the other part of it, few Englishmen will deny that the lapse of seven hundred years has only given polish to its sharpness. The frankness of Giraldus in putting this hit at himself on record, is quite in keeping with the general out-spoken honesty of the whole tribe of chroniclers. If we have a low opinion of them and their epochs, it is not that they have provoked us by any attempts to paint themselves and their contemporaries in white and pink colours. They lay into both with hearty good-will. Do the Danes triumph over the Saxons, or the Normans over both ; do the Saracens turn our ancestors out of the Holy City, or carry them off as slaves into the heart of Asia ?—it is all due to the shameful sins, gluttony, incontinence, usury, simony, and a long string more,—of the population generally. The wicked baron, we can assure our readers, catches it from the chronicler, as sharply as ever his successor does for pursuing virtuous beauty through the penny numbers of a popular romance in our own more refined period. The feudal times have left us their photographs though they knew nothing of photography, and have painted themselves, as Cromwell in the old story desired to be painted, with the warts on. Mr. Thackeray was not harder on George the Fourth than Henry of Huntingdon on William Rufus, or Matthew Paris on Henry the Third. Huntingdon calls William an "impious king, hateful alike to God and the people ;" and Matthew Paris grumbles through page after page, a true *frondeur* of the thirteenth century, with a stolid John-Bullish hatred of tyranny, waste, and foreigners, showing that the head of Cobbett could be as much at home under the cowl of a monk of St. Alban's of the thirteenth century, as under the hat of a journalist of the nineteenth.

Hitherto we have dwelt chiefly on those qualities of our venerable friends which they possessed in common with their more recent successors : natural sagacity, an eye for the splendours and beauties of life and the world, mother-wit and native humour. It is now time to describe some of the peculiarities of their position in literary history ; and to define and explain, as well as our limits permit, their point of view. We need hardly say that as regarded the ages before them (for about their own period they were shrewd enough, as we have shown), they were very credulous and uncritical. Historical criticism is quite a modern science, if science it can yet be called. The nature of the Roman agrarian laws was not understood till about the time of the French Revolution ; and it was after that event that Niebuhr changed the whole opinion of Europe about the sources of Roman

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\* WRIGHT'S *Giraldus Cambrensis*, 145-6.

history. The siege of Troy was not considered more doubtful than we consider the siege of Sebastopol to be, during the greater part of last century. Up to Dr. Johnson's time, Scotsmen derived their royal family from Banquo, and believed stories about their leading houses which are not a whit more solid than the incidents of the battle of the Lake Regillus. And yet it is astonishing how much the influence of the art of printing has altered historical *perspective*;—how near it has brought us to ages which, if we had only oral and scanty MS. records of them, would appear to us involved in illimitable distance and impenetrable haze. Under the last disadvantage, aggravated by difficulties of communication, social turbulence, imperfect culture, imperfect materials, all the old chroniclers laboured. Accordingly, grave archdeacons, men who were fair Latinists, and high theologians, did not scruple to repeat the most extraordinary statements about the early history of their native land. They tell us that the British nation is of Trojan origin, being descended from Æneas, through Ascanius, who had a son Silvius, who had a son Brute. It seems that a soothsayer had predicted of Brute, before his birth, that he would kill his father. The soothsayer was executed for his pains, but his prophecy came true for all that. Brute slew his father by accident with an arrow, and being banished from Italy went to Gaul. There he founded the city of Tours, and having afterwards conquered the Armoricans, passed over to Britain and subjugated it. So much for the origin of Britain, *i.e.* the land of Brute. The Scots had an equally veracious record of a dynasty of prodigious length, which took its place in real literature, thanks to the incomparable Latinity of Buchanan; and on the strength of which the town council of Edinburgh, many generations ago, hired a Dutch dauber to paint a series of fancy portraits of the whole line, still to be seen, with much other trash, at Holyrood. As for the Irish, Giraldus Cambrensis gives some highly curious accounts of the earliest settlers in their island, beginning with Casara, the granddaughter of Noah, who went there to escape the Flood, "with an ingenuity," says Giraldus, in a somewhat patronising tone, "laudable in a woman." An ancestor of the Gaels, according to Professor Aytoun,—

— nearly spoiled the Flood,  
By drinking up the water.

Which 'tis my belief  
He could well achieve it,  
Had the mixture been  
Only half Glenlivet.

But Casara was overcome by the Deluge and lost. A critical qualm here seizes Giraldus Cambrensis; for he confesses that he does not see how, "if nearly all perished in the Flood, the memory of these events and of their arrival could have been preserved." He comforts himself, however, with the reflection that "perhaps some record of these events was found inscribed on a stone or tile, as we read was the case with the art of music



before the Flood." And he proceeds to relate the successive immigrations: that of Bartholomæus, a descendant of Japhet, three hundred years after the Deluge; of Nemedus, the son of a Scythian; and so on to the Milesians, the tradition of whom, we need not say, is still alive and vigorous. All such queer fables point at once to the remote antiquity of the races from which we spring in Europe, and to the profound impression made on the European mind even in barbarous ages by biblical as well as profane history. Nor are they to be despised even now; they form still an appreciable part of that sentiment of nationality which, in Poles, Irish, Greeks, and other races, cuts out plenty of work for the best statesmen that Europe produces.

The credulity of the chronicler as to historical tradition was accompanied by an equal readiness to accept all wonders related of the material world and of distant lands. He has no difficulty in accepting such stories as that of Sir John Maundeville about those apples in the East which, cut them however you pleased, would always have inside the figure of the cross. He believed readily that a comet was the cause of a famine; or that the body of Pallas, the son of Evander, had been found uncorrupted at Rome, with a lamp at its head so constructed as to defy the power of wind or water to extinguish it. He never doubted that the true cross was still extant, and the crown of thorns, and some of the hair of Mary Magdalen. He was firmly persuaded of the importance of dreams, and of the constant interference of supernatural power in the affairs of the world—more especially in cases where the clergy had been ill-used. Some instances of the latter kind are singular enough. At a town in Saxony, in A.D. 1012, certain perverse people, men and women, would keep singing and dancing in the churchyard while a presbyter named Robert was saying mass. The good man remonstrated, but in vain. At last he lost patience, and exclaimed,—“May it please God and St. Magnus (the patron of the church) that you may go on singing for a whole year!” The imprecation took instant effect. They danced the entire twelvemonth, without suffering from heat, cold, hunger, or fatigue; without their clothes or shoes being worn out; till they beat holes in the earth up to their thighs. At length the Archbishop of Cologne made their peace for them with St. Magnus, and the spell was broken. Three of them expired immediately; the others slept three days and nights; some, who died afterwards, were famous for miracles. The natural moral follows: let people learn obedience.\* Take another case of severer punishment for injuries done to holy men. There flourished in the thirteenth century one Ralph Cheinduit, described by Matthew Paris as “the inexorable and unwearied persecutor of the church of St. Alban’s and the impudent usurper of its liberties for the space of three years.” “This, I say,” Matthew adds, “that all Christ’s faithful followers may see the evidence of the miracle, and the just vengeance which Alban, the protomartyr of

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\* Roger of Wendover, in ann. 1012.

England, inflicted upon him." And he proceeds to show what the audacious gentleman's fate was. He had been three years lying under ecclesiastical censure, and yet one day at the palace of Westminster he said, tossing his head about in a haughty manner, "Ha! what do you say about the monks of St. Alban's? Eh? what do you say of them? They have excommunicated me so long a time, so often, and so effectually, that I am much the better for it—fat and well—and so stout that I can hardly get into my saddle when I ride on horseback." He had scarcely spoken when he was seized with "a lack of strength," and carried home scarcely breathing. And he lived just long enough to make reparation and receive absolution,—through the mercy of St. Alban. It would, of course, be presumptuous to talk of apoplexy in such a case. Indeed, we are expressly assured by the chronicler that Ralph was far from being a solitary instance of such "miraculous vengeance" being inflicted on the "usurpers and disturbers of the liberties of the said martyr's church."

Not a few of these little miracle stories are distinguished by a vein of poetry, sometimes tender, sometimes tragic. To the former class belong certain events said to have foreshadowed the glory of St. Dunstan. His mother was in church on the day of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, when all the tapers went suddenly out and left the sacred building dark. While everybody was astonished, the taper of Dunstan's mother took light of itself, and so became the means of relighting them all. As the youngster grew up, too, a harp which hung on a peg played suddenly one day the melody of the antiphone *Gaudet in Calis*. Another legend, conceived in the same spirit of sacred poetry, grew up to explain how the epithet Venerable had been bestowed on Bede. The pious monk who wrote the inscription for his tomb sat late one night, striving, but in vain, to find the right word for the memorable man. He could not get beyond

Hæc jacent in fossâ  
Bede . . . ossa;

and he retired to rest, leaving the blank unfilled. But in the silent hours the pen of an angel supplied the want, and the good man found, on resuming his task in the morning, that Bede had received the honourable title which has ever since clung to his name. Of a similar stamp is the experience of two clerks, who, returning to their diocese, heard, while still a day or two's journey from home, the bell of the cathedral tolling with peculiar sweetness, and found on their arrival that the good bishop whom they all loved had at that very moment passed away to his rest. Sea as well as land was full of signs and wonders in the same ages of simple faith. The fleet which Cœur de Lion sent to the Mediterranean fell in with a terrible gale in the Bay of Biscay, when, just as the leading men in one of the chief ships were giving themselves up for lost, St. Thomas appeared, radiant in supernatural glory, amidst the tempest, and the wind gradually subsided. A similar experience befel William Longuepée, Earl of Salisbury, in the same generation, over whose storm-tossed vessel at midnight the Blessed Lady was pleased to hover, surrounded with

divine light, a harbinger of peace and a pledge of safety. Mysterious powers everywhere at work receive ample record in the same antique pages. A leper was cured by using water which had been used by Anselm ; and miracles were wrought at the tomb, in Hereford Cathedral, of St. Thomas, the son of a Cantelupe by a Gournay, the last Englishman canonized by the Holy See.

Sometimes such chroniclers' tales of the supernatural are more tragic, yet with a dash of the grotesque in their tragedy. The cellarer of a certain monastery had been defrauding the defunct members of their masses, in order to feed more sumptuously the living brotherhood. One time that he was passing the empty chapter-house, as he thought it, a voice that made his flesh creep summoned him to come in. He entered trembling, as well he might ; for there sat the dead abbot at the head of the table, with the dead monks around him, and the cowering sinner who had robbed them was first rebuked and then flogged. But the most awful stories are those in which the Devil and his subordinate devils appear : sometimes dragging corpses from their graves ; sometimes vainly attempting to bully good and pious men ; almost always triumphant over those who by wickedness had become their legitimate prey. The Devil was no abstraction, no principle of evil, no figure of speech, in the days of the chroniclers, but a real ubiquitous being, ever on the watch to ruin man, and endowed with indefinite powers of metamorphosis for the purpose. All mischief that was done, was done *Diabolo suadente* or *instigante* ; and even in politics he was so influential that he fairly ranked as a European Power, like the Emperor or the King of France. Long after the dates of which we have been chiefly speaking, that is, the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, Luther habitually talked of the Devil along with the Pope and the Turk, as the chief of a kind of Triple Alliance. This materialistic view, so to speak, of the Enemy is the real explanation of the intense credulity of our ancestors about witchcraft, which ceased to be believed in when the rigidity of the conception they had formed of him began to be refined away. In reading story after story illustrative of the prodigious superstitions which the chroniclers recorded and shared,—how, when Richard the First approached his father's corpse, it began to bleed, and the Lion-Heart, who feared nothing human, instantly wept with horror like a child,—in reading such things, we say, it is difficult to fancy how men breathed freely or enjoyed life at all. But the truth is that the counteracting elements were proportionately vigorous. There was a very active animal life, and a great deal of rude roystering jollity, for one thing ; while, of course, if one set of superstitions stimulated fear, another set encouraged hope ; and the Church was a vast standing army against the powers of hell, just as the feudal militia was always ready for service at short notice against foreigners.

The point of view, then, from which the chroniclers regarded things in general was the antithesis of the scientific one. They did not deal with "causes," "tendencies," "currents of opinion," and so on, like the modern

philosophical historian, at all. With an ever-living sense of the continuous action of Infinite Power on human affairs, they hardly grasped at all the idea of Law. They saw in Providence a force like that of the kings and barons under whom they lived, striking in at every moment to do justice in some incomprehensible way; and they saw such special intervention in a thousand cases in which nobody now would venture to say that he sees anything but the operation of general principles long since recognized as universal and unchangeable. But, for this very reason, their spiritual life was intensely sensitive and quick; and, with all their superstitions, they have a keen feeling of man's infinite responsibility and high destiny: a feeling elevating in itself, and which has certainly always been strong in the ages in which man has done anything great. The inspiration of their writing was avowedly religious; not to show "philosophy teaching by examples," but, as we may put it, "Providence teaching by examples." "The attentive reader," says Henry of Huntingdon, one of the most remarkable of them in the twelfth century, "will learn in this work both what he ought to imitate and what he ought to eschew; and if he becomes the better for this . . . it is the fruit of my labour which I most desire." Examples being best furnished by individuals, the chroniclers bestow their chief attention on the conduct of the conspicuous personages of each generation, the sovereigns, nobles, and high churchmen. It is not that they are indifferent to the condition of the masses, as we call them now. On the contrary, they are, as a rule, careful in noting the harvests and weather of each year, and their effects upon the price of provisions and the public health. But they do all this kind of thing in a very elementary way, natural to times when a dearth was met by sending the poor off for relief in divisions to the large proprietors, and when many died of hunger in spite of such precautions. Their principal force is expended on the moral and ecclesiastical side of life, and on the doings of those who were at the head of the kingdom; and what we learn from them of social, domestic, and economical details, is conveyed in their books incidentally. Some institutions which have made a great noise in the world are not expressly mentioned by the chroniclers at all. None of them tell us how and why heraldry arose, for one thing. And most of our definite knowledge about the formation of Parliament, the *status* of the baronage, and so forth, is drawn rather from legal documents than from the chronicler's page. Naturally, he occupied himself with the developed powers, the prominent establishments, of his day; and could not be expected to deal with growths the future importance of which it was impossible that he could foresee.

The transition from the old chronicle to the history as we understand it now, was made very slowly and gradually. Seven centuries and a half elapsed between the age of Bede and the age of Philippe de Comines, who is usually regarded as the founder of history proper. The last of the great chroniclers, a man so much connected with England that one almost thinks of him as half an Englishman, was Froissart, whom Gray called

"the Herodotus of a barbarous age." The comparison is a happy one; for both Herodotus and Froissart were chroniclers in soul, while they both give us the chronicle at that stage in which it is just passing into the history. Criticism is beginning in both, but has not attained full growth in either. Herodotus not unfrequently lets us understand that he does not quite believe all that he is reporting, but at the same time he has an obvious pleasure in narrating wonders, and his phantom galley at Salamis is an apparition quite after a chronicler's own heart. Froissart and he delight equally in making their heroes talk in their proper persons, and in reproducing the familiar aspects of heroic life; and they write with an obvious enjoyment of their subject which communicates itself to the reader, who, like the steed in Pope,—

Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.

They were both travellers and curious inquirers; both of strong religious feelings, and deeply sympathetic with the generations in which their lot was cast. Herodotus was followed by Thucydides, whose "first page" Hume thought "the beginning of real history." So Froissart was followed, though at a greater distance of time, by historians whose school may be said still to exist. For the greatest of these, we must look, not to the Holinsheds and such as he, however useful in their way, but to one great in so many other fields,—Francis Bacon. Bacon's was, we think, the earliest first-rate intellect employed upon historical writing, and perfectly enjoyable still in modern England; and his *History of Henry the Seventh* is one of the master-pieces of literature. The education by which such men as he were produced was given by the classics, whose action upon the intellect of Europe in abolishing its superstitions, sharpening its scientific acumen, widening its range of vision, and refining its sense of taste, has hardly even yet received proper appreciation amongst us. The heresies of the school of Erasmus are become the commonplaces of to-day; and they were all derived from the inspiration of that ancient Greek and Roman literature on which Erasmus and the friends of Erasmus bestowed their honourable and laborious lives. But if the influence of the classics superseded the influence of the chroniclers, so that a Hume and not a Froissart is the type of a modern writer of history, and is much more like a Thucydides or Tacitus than Froissart is like either of the three, yet the chroniclers are even in our own days getting their revenge. The craving for a rich, personal, pictorial style of history, is in reality, as hinted before, a return to the chronicling spirit, of which there is infinitely more in Macaulay or Froude than in Hume or Robertson. It is even possible, as we have indicated, that the ridicule of the old school of "Dryasdusts," which so many people now use at third-hand from Scott through Carlyle, may become a nuisance in the hands of half-read charlatans; and it is certain that the Comic Histories with which we were plagued some years ago had a direct tendency to pollute the mind of the rising youth of the nation. On the other hand, there is one influence at work which will

act as a wholesome check upon any undue activity of the minds engaged in making history too merely pungent and rhetorically descriptive. We refer to the current of thought of which the late Mr. Buckle was the best known representative, and the aim of which is to reduce history to a science properly so called. It is obvious that a philosophy of this kind, labouring incessantly to prove the operation of general laws on the highly complicated course of human action, will leave us, as one result, a repressing effect on the vagaries of the imagination. Successful or not, it will do much good by the study and thought which it will render imperative. Nor need it, even if successful, rob history of its colour and grace; for the rainbow is not less beautiful now that its laws are known, than it was when the old poets saw in it an Iris—

*Mille trahens varios adverso sole colores.*

And, just so, if the impulse which gave birth to the Crusades could be explained with equal clearness, the human heart would still beat responsive to the tramp-tramp of the mailed warriors on the Syrian shore, whose banners outshone the glory of the Eastern palm-tree and the Eastern rose. But to produce this effect, the historical writer, scientific or not, will need a share of the genius common to the great historian with the great poet; and whoever possesses it will find something in himself akin to the ancient, simple, pious, half-cultivated old chroniclers, whose dust rests under the flag-stones of the cathedrals, and amidst the ruins of the monasteries, of the land for which they loved to labour and to pray.

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## Reminiscences of an English Cadet in the Austrian Service.

### PART II.

IN June, 1850, we marched from Milan to take up our summer quarters in the neighbourhood of the Lago Maggiore, and go through the usual manœuvres, but on a larger scale, and under the eye of a field officer. The General in command on this occasion was Count Gyulai, afterwards so well known in the Italian War for his many retreats "for strategic purposes;" and of course we saw a good deal of him. He was by no means a favourite with either officers or men, nor did he ever attain to any popularity in the service, whatever he might do at Court. In after days the news of his partial disgrace touched our hearts very differently to what the tidings of poor Benedek's disasters did. He was excessively haughty in his manner; the severity of his discipline was not uniform, nor was it always altogether just; and whereas the yearly muster of troops in summer was generally considered a kind of holiday, he literally exacted more from the men than they were accustomed to endure even in barracks. It was an article of our creed that the Count was as ill-disposed towards the Jägers as Radetzky was known to be the reverse. In an ordinary way all those who were not told off for duty would be at liberty for the rest of the day after ten in the morning, but his Excellency used to have the Jägers out at all hours. He was very fond of throwing out the sharpshooters in all directions, and then when we were at a great distance the rallying call was sounded, the space for cavalry to attack was cleared, and we had to run at the top of our speed to form little clumps or larger squads. He would have this over two and three times in the same day; and under a broiling sun, with our knapsacks strapped on to our backs, it was fearful exertion. Our men were often regularly knocked up by it, and I have known them faint away with exhaustion after leaving the ground. When the alarm was given that Count Gyulai was coming through the camp, we used to scamper off like rabbits to their holes; whereas when the word passed that the old General Shassoldos was about, men and officers used to try to throw themselves in his way, for he would talk to the former in their own patois, give them wine or *Trinkgeld*, and had always a pleasant word for us.

After some weeks spent in this kind of practice, we were told off to detached villages, or small towns, in the neighbourhood of the Ticino. It happened just then that I had not received any money from England for some time, and as, boy-like, I could not bear to give up our only luxury, *i.e.* an evening visit to the *café*, I ceased to subscribe to the soldiers' mess, in order to save my poor kreutzers for the *café*. For six weeks I literally lived on coffee, cakes, and walnuts, and my ration of bread I used



to exchange against a couple of cigars. But it was in the days of golden youth, and I bore my hardships with a gay heart. The truth is, that in that climate and that land mere animal life is an actual intense pleasure. The air is so pure and clear that rock, sea, castle, lake, or river, even when miles away, looks like a painted picture which you could touch with your hand. The autumn there does not produce the same feeling of melancholy which it does in England. The leaves never seem to fall and decay, and the mellow tints and exquisite softness and stillness of the Indian summer linger to the very last. There are villas nestling in the hills, which look burnt white in the heat of the sun; but there are light cool breezes in the leafy ravines, and the tiny waves of the lake splash and sparkle, just to signify that their waters are not absolutely asleep. In some parts, too, there are dark pine-forests on high rocky ground, but everywhere there are orange-groves, clustering vines, the tender quivering leaf of the acacia, or the powdery grey sad green of the olive-woods, and sometimes the darker shade of the ilex palm or tamarind-tree. The peasantry, too, are so picturesque and gay-tempered, and my own comrades were so kind, debonnair, and light-hearted, that hungry I might be and often was, but it was not possible to be dismal for long together with these surroundings. What could be done in that direction, however, was done for me by our captain, whom I have before alluded to as a terrible disciplinarian. It chanced that one day on parade I did not hear my name called out, and of course was silent when I ought to have responded. The captain had been tearing at his moustaches the whole of the morning (an infallible sign of an evil temper for him), and at this instant he thundered out, "Cadet, are you too proud to answer to your name, and come forward and receive the Imperial money?" I instantly left my place and advanced to him, trying to explain my mistake. "Not a word, cadet, but go into barrack arrest until further orders," was his amiable reply.

We were at that time in a pleasant little town called Monza, and I had made some friends there, both men and women, whom in my heart I thought the most charming people in the world. Then, either from the coquetry which is natural to them, or from sentiment, or love of intrigue, or to provoke the jealousy of their countrymen, these beautiful dark-eyed women were often very gracious to us, and even when for patriotic reasons they were less so towards a full-blown Austrian officer, they were always ready, out of pure compassion and tenderness of heart, to give a bright glance and a kind word to a young cadet, who was also well known as an Engländer. Well, my good friends had, I knew, prepared a feast for me, and when I went off parade that day, I was quite in as bad a temper as my captain, and, as I thought, with much more reason. It was in vain I sent two of my comrades, according to custom, to beg me off. All the answer they got was *Nichts* (nothing), and I was driven nearly wild with vexation. Now I was quartered in a large farmhouse just outside Monza; it had no gates, but many doors, and the usual guard was placed only at the main entry. I began to contemplate breaking my arrest; the sin was

easy, the temptation great, and the risks,—well, I did not take them into consideration,—but as soon as the light shade of an Italian night began to fall, I fastened my cap well on my head, bit my strap hard in my teeth, braced my belt tight for racing, and holding my head well down, as soon as I was fairly outside of the house I flew like an arrow to the place of rendezvous, which was fully a mile off and on the other side of the town, through which I had, of course, to pass. I could hardly speak when I arrived, but how I enjoyed myself that night! I was quite the hero of the banquet, and when grey dawn began to break, the company stood up, and, glass in hand, we had a parting chorus to cheer me on my road back. I actually arranged that, *provided nothing awkward happened*, I would find my way there the following night, and then I set off at the top of my pace to the farmhouse. That awkward thing, however, did happen; for in turning a sharp corner of one of the streets I came face to face against my captain, with such a spin as nearly to knock him down. He reeled back against the wall, and I staggered into the middle of the road; then I stood “attention” and saluted, and he looked hard at me, and simply returning the salute, passed on. It was no use my running more after *that* rencontre, so I walked thoughtfully to my quarters, feeling very well assured that not of a feast, but of a prison, I should be the hero that night. I dressed myself mournfully for parade, to which I was escorted, as my fears foreboded, by the inspecting sergeant, according to “captain’s orders received.” After the usual routine I was called forward, and reprimanded with exceeding severity. The captain’s concluding words were:—“I know that a cadet can claim to be sent for punishment to the *propos*, or provost sergeant-major, or to the sergeant-major’s room; but now there is no *propos*, neither has the sergeant-major a barrack-room. You will therefore go to the guard-room, and there be *kurzgeschlossen* for twenty-four hours; you will afterwards remain under barrack arrest until I think fit to release you.” I was immediately conducted to the guard-room, there to undergo my sentence. In the punishment called *kurz-schliessen* manacles are put on the right ankle and left wrist; when shut, a cap is put over each of them, which closes the ends. These caps have holes in them. Then a chain with a bolt at the end of it is passed first through the leg manacle, then through that on the wrist; it is run up pretty tight, and fastened in the third link from the bolt by a padlock. The prisoner is cobbled in this manner for six hours at a time, when the sergeant of the watch is required to let out the chain to its full length, so that the prisoner may for two hours stretch himself and walk about, not indeed at his ease, but comparatively so. He is then again cobbled as before, and so on to the expiration of the sentence. This punishment is not allowed to be inflicted for more than forty-eight hours at a time, and the two hours of long chain are counted in such case along with the others; but they are not reckoned if the sentence is for any less period than forty-eight hours, so that in all I had actually thirty-two hours of cobbles and long chain. I sat sadly enough on the little truckle bed, with

my right foot on the other knee and my left wrist fast on to it, with no other amusement than rubbing up and polishing the remainder of the chain, and I remember thinking that it was a very severe chastisement, and that I had unquestionably merited it. I was horribly stiff when the first six hours were over, and tried to persuade the sergeant when he tied me up again to put the manacles on the other leg and wrist. The good-natured fellow would willingly have done it to ease me, but did not dare, for, as he truly remarked, if the captain came round and noticed it, the punishment would in all probability be doubled, and he would be included in it. I was aware we were under orders to march to Bergamo; and as the moment of my release drew near, I looked forward with actual pleasure to a long tramp on foot and in freedom. The two subalterns had arrived on the parade-ground, for I recognized their voices, and I heard the tread of the captain; still no message came to me, though from my prison window I could see the heads of the men, and could tell they were all in marching order. At last the door opened, and I was told to come out. My accoutrements were given me, but the lock was not in my rifle, and my sword was not in its sheath. I slung my knapsack, and then the chains and manacles just taken off me were fastened on to it in an unpleasantly conspicuous manner. My heart sank within me as I perceived a corporal and four privates with fixed bayonets, who immediately surrounded me, for then I knew that I was to march as a prisoner and in disgrace. It was certainly what may be called "hard lines," for we had thirty-two miles of ground to accomplish that day, and I was sadly cramped in my limbs from having been kept so long in one position. However, I had no rancorous feeling in me, for if I had met with severity, I had certainly not encountered injustice, and I thought I should best please my captain by showing him I was not sulky; so I stepped out my very best, and chatted, sang, and whistled as gaily as I could. Occasionally I saw him check his horse and fall back, to ascertain how I was getting on; and when he found I was not flagging even to the last, his stern old face looked positively kindly. He said afterwards to one of my comrades, who of course repeated it to me, "Our Engländer is made of good stuff; he has this day pleased me well." And at the end of that day's march I was released from arrest, and, full of good resolutions, took my place as usual with my comrades. I shortly afterwards received a remittance from home, and the welcome intelligence that efforts were being made to get me transferred to a cavalry regiment,—a change I greatly desired.

Whilst at Bergamo one of our cadets died after a very short illness. As a body they are so exceedingly healthy that it is a most rare thing for a cadet to die otherwise than in the field, or in consequence of wounds; and we had grown to regard such an accident as a kind of anomaly or unaccountable weakness. This poor fellow was by birth a Swiss, and a fine handsome youth much liked by us all. He was of course to be interred with military honours, and we obtained leave from the commanding officer to take it by turns to watch by the body.

I was called at two in the morning to perform my share of this melancholy task. The corpse was lying on a long table supported by trestles, and was covered with a sheet. I had hardly been alone with it in the room ten minutes before I thought I heard a noise under the sheet like tapping. I looked towards the place, but the body remained quite motionless, so I concluded it was my fancy. Then I dozed a little, and woke up, hearing most distinctly three deliberate raps proceeding from that part where the head was laid. I mustered courage to say aloud, "*Was willst Du?*"—(Dost thou want anything?)" but the sheet did not move, and no reply was given. I broke out into a cold perspiration, and began to hope I was not locked in. I would have given anything for courage to have raised the sheet and satisfied myself; but in the first place it seemed to me a sort of sacrilege to touch it; and, secondly, I dared not. So I sat staring very hard at it, the sweat standing on my forehead in great drops. The candles flickered and all was again quiet; then came the same sound—tuck-tuck-tuck—this time faster, and certainly proceeding from the table. I could stand it no longer, but rushed to the door and roared out for the guard. There was a general rush to see what was the matter; my courage returned when I found myself in company with others, though I cannot say my colour did—so I said with white cheeks, but with as much dignity and authority as I could get up, "The gentleman lying there wants some assistance." Even as I said these words we all heard the same sound, and equally we all bolted from the room. However, there are worse things than ghosts—one at least was my captain, so I got serious and desperate, and ordered the men to return into the room with me. They would not, however, enter unless I preceded them, and this I did not want to do. While we were discussing the point the doctor came up, to our great relief, having been fetched by one of the men who happened to be more sensible than the rest. He settled the question by walking straight up to the corpse and taking off the sheet. No; there our poor comrade was lying, cold, silent, and motionless, unmistakably dead. The surgeon, or to use the nickname which is invariably given them among the men, the *Pflasterschmierer*, or "salve-smearer," sharply taunted us with having disturbed him so uselessly, it being evident to him, he said, that it all arose out of our own fears and fancies. He was just retiring when, to our real delight, the noise was heard distinctly; and this time having the courage that is born of numbers, we set to work to find out the cause, which was quickly made apparent. The young cadet had been a Protestant, and therefore a minister of that faith had been sent for, so that the funeral might be conducted with the appropriate ceremonies, and this had caused a little delay in the interment. It was thought advisable to place blocks of ice about the body, and this ice had melted into little pools, which from time to time overflowed, and the water dropping from the table on to the floor had caused the tapping sound which had frightened us so much. It was long before I heard the last of the "cadet's ghost," as they chose to call it, from my companions; but they nevertheless

resolved that if any duty of a similar kind fell to our share in future it would be more agreeable to all parties to watch in couples.

Shortly after this I was sent for by the Adjutant, and informed that by order of the "Most High War Minister" I was to be transferred to the — Hussars, the regimental staff of which was then at Brescia. So I bade farewell to the Jägers, reminded them that though my whole body no longer belonged to them, my right leg and stirrup was theirs of right, and with many a kind hearty wish and warm grasp of their hands I left them, and immediately joined the staff and reported myself to my new Colonel.

The — Hussars was a very crack regiment : it was composed of pure Hungarians, and the celebrated General Georgey had served in it both as subaltern and adjutant ; but it had lately been somewhat in the shade, for during the Hungarian revolution in 1848, many of the men, and even one or two of the officers, had deserted in order to join Kossuth. It had consequently been sent out of Bohemia, and was to be quartered in Italy until it could be thoroughly reorganized. The task of getting together and bringing under proper discipline some 1,600 men is by no means a trifling one, and not any easier because the men were Hungarians. They perhaps learn more quickly than Austrians, and are more ready and active ; but they are also excitable, passionate, and much more difficult to keep in hand. The position of Colonel in the service is, however, one of great power and authority, and our Colonel had been especially selected for the purpose on account of his great skill and his remarkable capacity for conciliating and attaching to him both officers and men. He was a magnificent-looking soldier, courteous and genial in address and disposition, and of unswerving justice in discipline. His horsemanship was simply perfection from a military point of view. We used sometimes to get up races among ourselves, and I have seen him ride a steeplechase in a fashion absolutely suicidal according to English notions, *i.e.* with a loose rein and a military seat, and yet by his high courage, perfect balance, and the great strength of his limbs, he kept his horse together, and arrived first at the winning-post, cool and unconcerned, and bestriding his horse as though he and it were one and the same. My impression is, however, still, that if he had had a fall it would have been not only a cropper but a crusher. The long stirrup and balance seat are not the best aids for going "cross-country," and though our own cavalry officers are in the hunting-field as bold if not bolder riders than the others, those who do not shorten stirrup-leathers and abandon the military seat get the most falls and the worst—which, however, they take with the pluck natural to English gentlemen. "Therefore it is," says Friar John in the *Inestimable Life of the Great Gargantua*, "that I make my prayers in the fashion of stirrup-leathers, and I shorten them or lengthen them when I think good." In one matter our Colonel was thoroughly Austrian : he was exceedingly particular that the officers should be dressed strictly according to the regulation pattern.

I remained at Brescia only until my new uniform was made, and then joined my regiment at Cremona. I arrived there late in the evening; but anxious to make acquaintance with my comrades, and not without a secret wish to display my new uniform, I followed them to the opera, where as usual a large box was retained for our use. This was not counted unto me for weakness as it would have been in England. I hardly know how to define the difference, but in Austria, though the extreme of etiquette is observed, there is an utter absence of pretension or surface manner. There is a kindliness almost like that of home, and a simple directness in all they do or say, which I have rarely seen, except in the very best and most cultivated English men and women. Slow they may be, disastrously slow as late events have proved them, but honourable, truthful, and high-couraged and sweet-tempered to the last. I hope I may be pardoned this digression; but when I compare the dignified and grieving yet honest telegrams of Franz Joseph, in the Italian war, and the sturdy outspoken despair of General Benedek after Sadowa, with the alternate boastfulness and rancorous bitterness of the Italians, I cannot help feeling that the first are cast nearer to the ideal of a genuine Englishman than the last.

My comrades received me with great kindness, and nothing remarkable occurred except that my military spurs—worn of course for the first time (and enormously long they were)—tripped me up, causing my sword to get between my legs; the consequence of which was that down those high, broad, and steep stairs which led from the box I rolled from the top to the bottom, amidst roars of laughter from my new friends, and making a clatter which, great as it was, was nothing to that which I heard in my own ears when I managed to get on my legs again.

The difference between a cadet in a cavalry regiment and one in a Jäger regiment is enormous. Mind, I never regret for one moment that I was at first a Jäger, and had to undergo the hard discipline and severe physical exercise inseparable to the position. I am quite sure it made a better man of me; and to be able to walk between thirty and forty miles a day, in full or rather heavy marching order, before a man has reached his twentieth year, is no bad preparation for a cavalry regiment, because that kind of work strengthens the muscles of the leg and thigh amazingly. But the difference between my former duties and those which now fell to my lot was exceedingly agreeable to me. There was, to begin with, only one cadet besides myself, and I had a room assigned to me exclusively for my own use. I was thrown entirely into the society of the commissioned officers, and was allowed to remain out of barracks after the call for retreat at 9 p.m. There was a servant whose duty it was to clean my horse, clothes, and accoutrements. I had of course, being only a cadet-sergeant, to take my turn for inspection: but I had no longer to mount guard, as the cavalry furnish no sentries beyond what are required for their own barracks and stables. In fact I was in all essential respects treated like a commissioned officer, and my Colonel promised me that, as soon as I had mastered the Hungarian language, I should receive my



commission. Naturally, I set myself to work in earnest to accomplish it. Yet, while in the Hussars, I tried a bit of more severe punishment than had yet fallen to my lot; but it was voluntary, or at most was accepted under the influence of moral pressure. It happened in this wise. A man was brought up to receive twenty-five cuts with a stick for stabbing and otherwise ill-treating his horse, and it was my duty to conduct him from the guard-room to the ground, see the sentence inflicted, and escort him back to prison. After it was over, I stood talking with some of the non-commissioned officers about it, and holding one of the sticks which had been used in my hand, boy-like, I expressed a wish to know how hard I could hit with it. The senior sergeant of my troop said, "Well, cadet, if you will stand a quart of wine you may give me half a score of cuts with your whole strength." I agreed to the proposal, and without another word he lay down, and took the ten blows which I administered without a sound, a word, or a movement. When it was over he of course got his wine, and then tried to persuade me to try "just one stroke," saying that I could not be a thorough hussar unless I knew what it was like. An officer entered while we were discussing the matter. I reported of course, according to custom, and he then inquired what we were talking about. The senior sergeant laughed and replied, "I have been telling our Engländer that he is no hussar until he has tried *Stockreich*, but he does not seem to like the idea." The officer said *So*, and stroked his moustaches, and in going away added, "*Sie haben kein Courage*—(You are wanting in courage.)" At these words I saw several of the men smile. Now I expected to become an officer, and knew very well I need never hope to do anything with my men if I allowed them to suppose I was deficient in pluck; so I said that at any rate I would see what it was like, and lying down called out to the sergeant to give me a cut and a good one. It may be that his arm was stronger than mine, or that my skin was more tender than his, but it was an awful blow, and I do not know which touched the ground first, my feet or the stick, for I was on my legs in a second, one hand on the part struck, and the other on my mouth. I could hardly breathe, and knew not whether to laugh or groan. However, I decided to grin and bear it. Fortunately, an immediate retreat to my room was necessary, for my thick trousers were cut across as though by a knife, and for many days I found the saddle exceedingly painful, notwithstanding the sheepskin and extra padding with which it was furnished.

On joining, my principal business was in the riding-schools, but I delighted in it. The sergeant-major of the squadron gave me separate lessons in the first instance; and I likewise rode in each of the classes with the men, so that often before 10 A.M. I had been on eight or ten different horses, and was sometimes nine hours in the saddle in one day. Four cavalry regiments, three Hussar and one Dragoon, were mustered that year for practice on the plains of Pordenone in Venetia. We turned out at 6 A.M., and it was a pretty sight when the four detachments issued forth from their several quarters to the rendezvous. When we were all



drawn in line or in column, there were at least 6,500 men on the ground, exclusive of the horse artillery and rocket batteries.

In three weeks I received my commission as lieutenant of the second class. My captain was likewise promoted; and when he gave me, according to custom, my sword and officer's sword-knot, his regimental horse was also transferred to my keeping. This was a kind of memorial of my commanding officer, which it gave me much pleasure to receive, for Count S——, though young, was an admirable soldier and horseman. He was of one of the first Hungarian families, and very popular with us all, and his kindness to a youngster like myself I shall always remember with gratitude. With some friendly assistance from my comrades I was able that evening to appear at the *café* dressed as they were. During our stay there the young Emperor Franz Joseph came to inspect us, and we had a good deal of parade duty and much rejoicing. Among the guests invited was the Duke of Parma, who appeared in the uniform of junior-colonel of the Hussars. One morning being near the Imperial quarters at break of day, I heard several bugle-calls for which I could not account, and shortly afterwards saw the Emperor and the Grand Duke riding about together; the latter had a bugle under his arm, and was giving his Majesty all the new calls which were to be adopted in the army. The Duke frequently joined us at the *café* and took part in a game at cards. He was, however, often very short of cash, though he was constantly accompanied by his minister and purse-bearer, Baron Ward, the Yorkshire stable-boy. I have often heard him wish that he had been born a poor cavalry captain instead of a Grand Duke. Had it been so, he would probably have had a longer and happier life, and he had certainly all the qualities which constitute a man a good comrade. I have said that the Hussars are composed of Hungarians; the word itself signifies the twentieth man, for in former times one man in twenty was taken for the cavalry, and the Hussar dress is, in fact, the national costume of the Hungarians. We wore trousers, tight-fitting Hessian boots, edged round the top with gold chain lace and gold rosette, a short tunic called *Attila* with five rows of lace across the chest: the olives or buttons were of silver, and the sling-jacket, lined with scarlet cashmere and edged with fur, served for an overcoat. The pouch-belt was of broad gold lace, the cartouch-box of silver embossed with the double-headed eagle; the girdle of gold lace is four fingers broad, and the shako is of white cloth with a black and yellow feather and gold chain and cord attached to it, while the sabretache is of red cloth embroidered with gold. The undress was the tunic, grey trousers, and black forage-cap edged with gold cord, and finished with a gold rosette worked with the initials of the Emperor. I describe all this for two reasons: first, all the extra finery of the Hussar is for a purpose, and every article has its use. For instance, the sabretache is a pocket, as the Hungarian is supposed to have no stowage-room in his tight-fitting dress; the chains on the shako are for extra curb-chains; the cord is made strong enough to be useful for many purposes; and the sling-jacket, called in Hungarian *churepe*, is the winter

coat, and for the privates is lined with sheepskin. Secondly, the whole expense of my uniform, full and undress, trappings and saddlery, did not exceed 108*l.*, though that sum would not procure a plain infantry outfit in England, much less the uniform of a Dragoon or Hussar, as I know to my cost. And this is because, though it is understood that Austrian officers must be gentlemen, it is not assumed that they are also rich men. A supply of every article which they can require is kept at the regimental staff, furnished at cost price, and paid for either then or by instalments, according to the convenience of the officer. The uniform is made by the regimental tailor at a most reasonable charge, and for perfection of fit and good workmanship I never met with anything to beat our soldier-tailors. By constantly working for military men, and for them only, they turn their whole attention to that branch of their craft, and have a military cut which, for style and ease, is the best I ever saw. If I had my own way, no military tailor should ever touch a civilian; it only spoils his style and demoralizes his ideas.

Again, my pay as a lieutenant of the second class was thirty-two florins (about 3*l.* 4*s.*) per month, without any deductions for income-tax. I had forage for three horses, quarters, consisting of three rooms for myself and one for my servant (the latter also given to me), together with a soldier out of my own troop to be my orderly and take care of my horses. There is no general mess, but each officer caters for himself as he thinks best: in some cases three or four club together, and have a mess of their own; others dine at the hotels when they can afford it. I joined two other men, and as we had good rooms, and our servants were not contemptible cooks, while provisions were cheap and plentiful, we found that we had every day an excellent dinner of three courses for about 1*l.* each a month. We breakfasted at the *cafés* for sixpence, or even fourpence, and supped there likewise. The pay may seem small, but the privileges and conveniences accorded to the Austrian officer are very great. He is treated with the utmost consideration, and everything is done by the State so that he shall not be forced into expenses above his means. A good box at the theatre was always ours at half-price; the band and mess subscriptions, which swallow up the slender pay of an English ensign, were unknown among us; many of us lived comfortably entirely on our pay, and found we had a surplus for cigars and the opera. A poor gentleman is much better off, and stands in a more satisfactory position in the Austrian service than in the English army. The regimental bands played not only for the amusement of our own men, but for the public generally, and were of course paid by Government.

As a rule, the Austrian bands are the most magnificent in the world: they greatly excel both the Prussian and French; in some regiments they number as many as ninety performers, and comprise a good average of really skilled and admirable musicians. I am aware that the question of the reorganization of some portions of the system by which our own army is recruited and managed, is one much discussed in England at the present

moment. I should be glad to think that such reforms, if they are ever carried out, will affect advantageously not only the private but the officer. Much, very much, remains to be done in that direction. Omitting the subject of the regimental band—though I think the money to support it would never be grudged by the English tax-payer if it were distinctly understood that it was no longer the property of the officers, but was to play at proper times, and in public places, for the encouragement of the men and the pleasure and amusement of the people in whatever town the regiment happened to be quartered—there are still the mess and uniform grievances to be adjusted. Look at them from what point of view you will, extravagance is forced upon the needy gentleman; and whether he is rich, or the reverse, extortion is practised with regard to these two matters. If the sale of commissions and promotion by purchase are ever abolished, and a severe course of professional study is made compulsory, our officers will enter the army no longer as an agreeable amusement for a few years, but will regard it as their career for life. They will also probably be drawn from a poorer but more ambitious and intelligent class of men. It will therefore be very essential so to reduce the cost, that a man can live on his pay as a gentleman should do; and I have shown how inexpensively, and yet how efficiently, the thing is worked in the Austrian service. The original object of a regimental mess was to reduce the outlay for each man individually, and to give him a good dinner for less money than he could get elsewhere. That the reverse is the case, is in English regiments a notorious fact. Again, if the uniform and trappings required by the officer were furnished to him by Government at cost price from a regimental store, and made by the regimental tailor, it would surely be a wise reform; and since it would cost no human being a farthing, but would simply put a stop to a good deal of jobbing and black-mail, it should not be difficult to carry out. It would protect both the pockets and the morals of our subalterns; for the first-class tailors who call themselves “military” make enormous profits on every single article which they supply.

The time came for our division to go into winter-quarters, and we repaired to Crema—a rather dull little town I had thought it while stationed there with the Jägers. The school for “rough-riders” was held there, in which I was to learn my duties for the next four months. On our march we stayed a couple of days at Verona, and I along with the other officers of the division had the honour of receiving an invitation to dine with Field-Marshal Radetzky. Our “old father” conversed with us all separately, though we were a very numerous company, and he was good enough to call me to him, detaining me by his side for a considerable time, and treating me with marked kindness. I was, of course, well aware that I owed this favour to the fact that he had recognized me as one of the old — Jägers, to which branch of the service he was known to be extremely partial; indeed he told me so, and I was much gratified by the compliment so conveyed to my old corps. Radetzky’s son was also present at the

dinner: he was a general, though on half pay, and on account of failing health and infirmities, apparently attributable to old age, quite unfit for service. The two formed an odd contrast, for the son looked very little younger than his father, but had nothing of the same keen fiery glance, or hale, active appearance. A very important and distinguished personage, in his own way, and certainly in his own opinion, was Karl, the Marshal's servant. He stood behind his master's chair, attending solely to him, and never deigning to lend a hand or cast an eye on any either right or left. It would appear they understood each other very well, for it was Karl's custom, when he thought the Marshal had eaten sufficient, to take away his plate at once. He did so on this occasion; the "old father" looked disconsolate, but neither surprised nor rebellious, and began in the most unoffending way to nibble at and break off pieces of his bread. The officious wretch immediately removed this also. Fortunately we could pass the bottles about without his stopping them, so that if our good "father" was stinted of his food, his dutiful children prevented his supplies of wine being cut off. General Hess was chief of Radetzky's staff, and was of course in pretty close attendance on him. Between the General and Karl there was not a very good understanding, and as commonly happens the dislike entertained by the inferior was the most openly expressed. On one occasion Karl said, "General, both of us cannot remain with 'our father;' therefore one of us must leave him, but I shall not be the one to go." It might, of course, be only a coincidence, but shortly after the General certainly did go, and Karl was left master of the field. From that time, whenever we had anything to do with Karl, we treated him with a respectful awe, which I have reason to believe was highly gratifying to his queer cross-grained temper.

Duels, though strictly forbidden in the service, are, nevertheless, connived at, if not permitted by the authorities. They are not of frequent occurrence, for though the intercourse among the officers is as close and unrestrained as that which subsists between brothers, it is tempered by extreme politeness and good feeling; moreover, the Austrians are not naturally a quarrelsome race. I do not approve of duels, though I am disposed to think the knowledge that a resort to cold steel would most certainly be the result of any rudeness helps to maintain among men a high standard of refinement and courtesy of manner. My first duel was in this wise: one of the cadets had received his promotion to the rank of commissioned officer, and according to custom celebrated the affair by giving a dinner. We dined well, too well perhaps, for champagne is a heady drink for youths accustomed to the thin light wines of Germany, which were our usual beverage. After dinner a few words were exchanged on some trivial matter, and, in answer to a remark of mine, one of my comrades told me that "I knew nothing about it, and was an *altes Weib* ('old wife') for saying so." As I was well aware that this was an epithet I ought not to allow to be applied to me, I immediately left the room with a brother officer, and just outside the door we held our consultation. In reply to my question he said he had

distinctly heard the offensive words : so I sent him back to make arrangements for a hostile meeting next day. Everything was settled in less than three minutes ; I resumed my place at the table, and the conviviality went on as before. The next morning at nine we breakfasted together, principals and seconds, in the most amicable way ; for we were really excellent friends, and had no ill-feeling in the affair. The place selected was the old church, which was used as our riding-school, and the weapons were our cavalry swords. My antagonist was neither so tall nor so muscular as myself, but more nimble and a better swordsman, so that I counted on having the worst of it. We were stripped to the waist, and our swords, after being well sharpened, were slung to our waists by silk handkerchiefs. Our seconds took up their position, also with drawn swords ; the word was given, "On guard !" and we were then at liberty to slash away as well as we could. Before long I received a cut in the fleshy part of my right arm, and blood being drawn, proceedings were stopped, and I was asked if I were satisfied ? The doctor examined the wound and pronounced it to be nothing serious, and by that time I had got warm and wished to flesh my own sword, if ever so little, so I elected to continue. After much parrying and thrusting, I cut through my antagonist's guard and pierced him in the breast. The wound looked ugly, but we were both glad to find that it was not even dangerous, and, moreover, that it brought the duel to an honourable conclusion. He reported himself sick on "doctor's certificate," and from that moment we were firm friends.

Nearly the whole of the winter months were devoted to practice in the *Regiments Equitations Schule*, or riding-school. The best rider among the officers was appointed by the Colonel to act as riding-master, and the cadets, junior officers, two non-commissioned officers from each squadron, and in fact any other officer whose style of riding was not considered sufficiently good, were given into his charge. We were put through a thorough course of school-riding, drill, sword-exercise, veterinary surgery, practical and theoretical. We were required to perform all the minor operations, to learn to shoe a horse, break him in, &c. ; and from 5 A.M. to noon, we were at this kind of work almost without intermission. The school at Crema was an old church fitted up for the purpose. On the place where the altar had stood, and which was greatly elevated, a splendid gallery was erected for spectators, and the arrangements of the establishment were excellent. At 2 P.M., we again assembled for drill until 6 P.M., when we went to the stables to see the horses settled down for the night, and we were then at liberty to amuse ourselves until 5 A.M. in the morning, but it will be admitted we had not much idle time on our hands. Short of a course at a regular veterinary college, I know no place where a man gains so much scientific and practical knowledge of horses as in an Austrian cavalry regiment, and there is this further advantage, that the teaching given comprehends every branch of horsemanship. All the unruly, vicious, or unbroken horses are sent to the riding-school to be tamed or trained ; and, as I was well advanced, I was placed in the rough-

riding class, and had one after the other of these animals given to me to mount and break.

The time drew near for the yearly inspection to be made by the Colonel of the division, and when the day was fixed for his arrival we were all prepared to the very last point, and were, moreover, in a very serious frame of mind. It began with a heavy drill under the command of the Major, after which the Colonel was to examine the kit, horses, saddlery, &c. of the different troops separately. When the turn came for the inspection of horses for my troop, I was filled both with pride and apprehension. On the one hand, I knew that they were in perfect discipline and admirable condition, and I was so far sure of receiving his approbation. On the other hand, there was among them a most vicious and unmanageable brute, which was on that day at least my *bête-noire*, for he rarely missed a chance of showing his furious and unmanageable temper, and I felt certain that on an occasion like this he would, if possible, distinguish himself. We had given him the name of *Jiddo* (the Jew), and he was a magnificent horse, in colour coal black. He would often almost scream with rage, would worry with his teeth every one he could get hold of, and strike both with fore and hind legs. There was only one man in the troop who could do anything at all with him, and, though not a very good rider, Jiddo was of course given into his charge. His last rider (the trumpeter to the squadron), a gipsy by birth, this brute had killed. Each man led out his horse at the proper distance, and to my eye all looked well; but following the others, only considerably in the rear, was Jiddo, to my great relief, walking along with great decorum. The Colonel instantly said to me, "For what reason does that black horse not close in properly?" "Vice, sir," was my reply, and nothing further passed at that moment, though I observed a peculiar and ominous twitching of the Colonel's nose, which satisfied me the circumstance was not forgotten. Each horse was thoroughly examined and pronounced to be in a satisfactory state, and at last came Jiddo, with his ears well laid back and the whites of his eyes exhibited like a storm-signal. He stood, however, still as a statue, almost ominously so. The Colonel approached him, but no sooner did he put out his hand to touch him than he reared up, and struck with his near fore-leg full at the officer's head, and would assuredly have killed him had I not braved etiquette, and catching hold of his arm suddenly twisted him away. As it was, I could not prevent the animal giving him a severe blow on the shoulder. The officer made no sign of pain or alarm, but his nose twitched more than ever. He said to the man in charge, "Turn in," and then addressed me with great slowness and deliberation, as follows:—"I am satisfied on the whole with the appearance of the horses in your troop, but I am surprised that a lieutenant of Hussars should allow a wild animal to be among them. In one month from this day I shall return here, and I must find that horse as tractable as the others. *I thank you.*" These last words are the phrase generally used by a superior to inform his subaltern that the interview is over. One month to make Jiddo



as quiet as other horses! I was well persuaded the thing was impossible, but it was the Colonel's orders and must be obeyed, or I knew the consequences—arrest and disgrace. Any one who has been in a cavalry regiment will remember how difficult it is to prevent soldiers playing tricks with their horses, which ruin the animals' temper. The Germans are much quieter and less cunning in expedients, but the Hungarians were as full of mischief as a set of English schoolboys; so my first step was to remove Jiddo and his attendant to my own stables, and keep the former under lock and key, so that no one might meddle with him and undo my work. It was many days before Jiddo allowed me to approach him without attacking me, but that point gained I began to see my way clearer. Rarey's system had not then been invented, but every means I could think of I faithfully and perseveringly used. Every spare moment I spent with him, and at last he would allow me to caress him frequently, and to clean him, pick up his feet, and perform all those little offices about him which a groom usually does. He let me saddle and unsaddle him, and had not as yet worried me, and he would when in a good humour follow me about in the stable, and answer to my voice by neighing; but beyond this point we had not proceeded, and the time was growing very short. On application, and stating the reason, I was excused from my usual drill, and for the last three days I hardly ever left "The Jew,"—"accursed Jew," as my comrades now called him. The month expired, and to the hour, almost to the minute, the Colonel arrived. I was awaiting him in the barrack-yard, having prepared myself for the encounter as best I knew how—which was by stuffing my pockets with lumps of sugar, with especial reference to a well-marked weakness of "The Jew." The Colonel said very gently, "Let me see, sir, whether you have obeyed my orders." I saluted and went into the stable, saddled "The Jew," and having popped a lump of sugar into his ready mouth, I brought him out apparently in a wonderfully docile frame of mind. I got him well into the centre of the barrack-yard by a kind of tacking progress, so that he should not see the spectators who were to witness his behaviour; but alas! the moment he caught sight of the Colonel and his staff, he laid back his perverse ears and glared at them like an infuriated savage. I knew directly that it was all up with him, but I still continued to walk by him, patting him, and exhorting him affectionately in an under-tone to restrain his temper, to be amiable for five minutes even if he were to be vicious for all eternity, and not to ruin my prospects as well as his own. As I expected, the instant the Colonel offered to touch him, Jiddo sprang into the air off all fours with a roar of rage. The Colonel said, "Well, sir, it certainly appears to me that you have *not* carried out my orders."

I felt perfectly reckless, but answered respectfully, "I have tried every means I could think of, sir, for the whole of the past month; every moment of my time I have been with him in his own stall, and he is quiet with me. Look!" and with the courage of desperation I passed beneath the horse's belly, picked up his fore-foot and placed it on my



shoulder, and even put my arm within his mouth. The animal, I am thankful to say, never stirred or objected in the slightest degree, but sniffed about me for more sugar. The Colonel then said, "Lieutenant, I have heard and can well discern that you have worked with that horse, so I dismiss you with commendation, only adding that he *must* be made quiet and tractable, not alone towards you, but towards every one else." It was over and I breathed again.

"Accursed Jiddo!" said my brother officers when I detailed the matter to them; "we will no longer have that beast in our regiment; for it is a disgrace that a Jew should be even bestridden by Christian gentlemen. The Jew shall go and quickly."

Our efforts in this direction were successful; and long before the yearly inspection came round, Jiddo was conspicuous by his absence. I forget how it happened. As well as I remember, he was selected for some long and difficult journey, and never returned; but I always felt some little gratitude towards the poor animal for having behaved well towards me in what I regarded as an awful crisis at the time.

The Major who then commanded our division was not by any means a popular character. He had two peculiarities in his disposition: he was exceedingly amorous and exceedingly suspicious; and these infirmities acted and reacted on each other until we had no rest. His fixed idea was that a revolution was constantly on the point of breaking out, or that some conspiracy was being hatched beneath our very feet, which he would be blamed if he did not discover and crush. I really think the numerous ladies to whom he paid his court must have taken pleasure in mystifying him and playing on his fears; for after a visit of this kind he used to appear full of care and importance, confine us to barracks for several nights, double the guard and sentries, and order the horses to be kept saddled, and everything in readiness for an outbreak. Of course it never came. Crema was a singularly quiet little town, and the inhabitants were certainly as well, if not better affected towards us than those of many other places. A young officer who had been under the Major's command at Lodi, told me that while there he rushed into the *café* one morning after a heavy drill, and announced to the astonished officers, who were composedly getting their breakfasts, that "the revolution was abroad, the tricolour was publicly displayed, and they were instantly to get under arms and in the saddle." Of course the *café* was cleared in an instant, and every man was off like a shot; but the revolution did not seem to make progress—at least nothing was to be heard or seen. The market-place was indeed crowded, but it was with women and girls. The Major was a little disconcerted; he, however, still asserted that he had seen the tricolour openly exhibited in the market-square, and thither he insisted on his officers accompanying him, in order that they might be satisfied of the fact; and there he pointed out what he imagined to be the offensive emblem. The truth was, the old Major was somewhat near-sighted and uncertain of vision at the best of times. Now he had gone to the market-

place to look after and chat with the pretty peasant-girls, but his eye had caught sight of the radishes which were laid out for sale in large square masses, red and white, with their green leaves between each kind, and he immediately conceived the notion that they were the tricoloured *drapeau*. He had to bear joking about his mistake for a long time afterwards, but he never changed his ideas, and always believed that the revolution was only kept under by his activity and presence of mind. With a commanding officer so notoriously gallant, though certainly past the prime of life, it may easily be supposed that his juniors were well inclined to follow his example. We were all young, gay-hearted, fond of pleasure, as was natural at our age, and some of us were also exceedingly sentimental; so the majority of us were in love, or we fancied ourselves so. We frequented the opera perpetually, and when we were invited to balls we waltzed with a dexterity, a devotion, and a perseverance to which few but Austrians ever attain.

Outside the walls of Crema was the residence of an Italian Count M——, who was said to have married the loveliest woman in all Lombardy, where beauty is by no means rare. According to report he was furiously jealous of his wife, and it was quite certain that they lived in the utmost seclusion. No gentlemen of any kind were admitted into the house, certainly no Austrian Hussars were. The countess never appeared at the opera, and very rarely at mass, and when there was closely shrouded. But two of our number had caught a glimpse of her eyes in the church from behind her veil, and the effect was overwhelming; and another had seen her at a great distance walking in the grounds, and declared that her graceful undulating figure was perfection. Some poor peasants, too, told the same tale, and nothing was lost in the narration, until we were half wild to behold this beauty, were it but for an instant, and formed many plots to bring it about, which, however, all ended in failures. At length we concocted a fresh scheme. We determined to ride out all together, and when near the house one of us was to make his horse rear over, and fall off the animal, and then lie on the ground as if senseless. The remainder were to consult together as though in trouble and perplexity, and then to take the injured man up, and carry him to the house, and demand some temporary assistance which one felt could hardly be refused, and take our chance for the rest. We selected the hour when, as we were told, the count and his servants would be taking the midday siesta; and at the proper place the officer who had the duty assigned to him, fell off his horse with right good-will, and lay on the road like a log of wood. We could hardly retain our gravity, but remembering that we might meanwhile be watched, we proceeded to do what we had previously rehearsed. Finding, in spite of our endeavours, that our comrade did not open his eyes, we lifted him up, and carried him slowly towards the château. He was a great heavy fellow, and certainly made no effort to lighten himself or our task, but lay so slack and limp that it was with great difficulty we could keep our hold on him, or prevent his slipping through our hands on to the ground. We were admitted by a

servant, to whom we explained the state of affairs. He preceded us upstairs, and we followed, bearing our freight in secret triumph, and taking care to step as noiselessly as possible. We deposited the injured man on a couch, and stood around in silence like so many mourners. He opened his eyes (the servant had retired), gave us one expressive glance, and relapsed into insensibility. I remember the scene as if it were but yesterday. The *jalousies* were carefully closed to exclude the midday sun, which even at that season of the year had a certain power; but the windows were open, and admitted a delicious perfume of flowers, while the room was decorated with pictures, and hung with heavy tapestried curtains of some sombre colour. I suppose the oldest among us had not seen three-and-twenty summers, the youngest perhaps about seventeen; and while we were waiting in some embarrassment as to our next proceedings, the door opened noiselessly, and the countess herself stood among us, followed by a major-domo bearing wine and other restoratives. The lady was perhaps a year or two older than any of us, and advanced quite with an air of protection and authority, but certainly a more radiantly lovely woman our eyes had never yet looked on. She was dressed in a white muslin gossamer kind of robe, and with her large lambent gleaming eyes and slight fragile figure, she seemed like a vision of brightness suddenly raised up among us. We hastily stated our case, and expressed our fears, omitting all mention of the one which most beset us, *i.e.* the entrance of the count, and then under her directions we busied ourselves in various ways about the injured man, taking especial precautions, as we did so, to keep our swords and spurs from clanking. I armed myself with a pair of scissors, but it was our fashion to wear our heads so closely shorn, that unless I had snipped off my friend's moustaches there was little or nothing to do in that direction, so I laid them down again and waited. Animation was still suspended, and the major-domo rather officiously proposed to bleed from the arm. We did not dare to look at each other, or to negative the proposition, though we were very uncertain how the invalid would stand the test. We *felt* that the eyes of the countess were watching us curiously, and when I stole a glance I detected an expression of mirthful humour on her lips as she desired me to turn back his coat-sleeve. He submitted with a stolid courage for which we felt really grateful, but just before the incision was actually made the count entered hastily, and with a clouded brow. The countess instantly vanished. Thereupon, our comrade showed signs of returning vitality, and in a few minutes he was on his legs and able to walk downstairs leaning on my arm. We expressed our best acknowledgments to the count for his hospitality, lifted our friend into his saddle, and, as soon as we were out of sight, we set spurs to our horses and galloped to the barracks—every one of us, from the eldest to the youngest, madly in love with the Countess M—. We kept our own counsel, or thought we did; but the story somehow got abroad, and a few days afterwards the count left that part of the country, taking his wife with him, and the château remained empty and desolate.

## A Week in a French Country-House.

### PART I.



HERE'S a letter that concerns you, Bessy," said my mother one morning a week or two ago, as I came into our little breakfast-room at Linton.

"And we say you're to go," said aunt Emily.

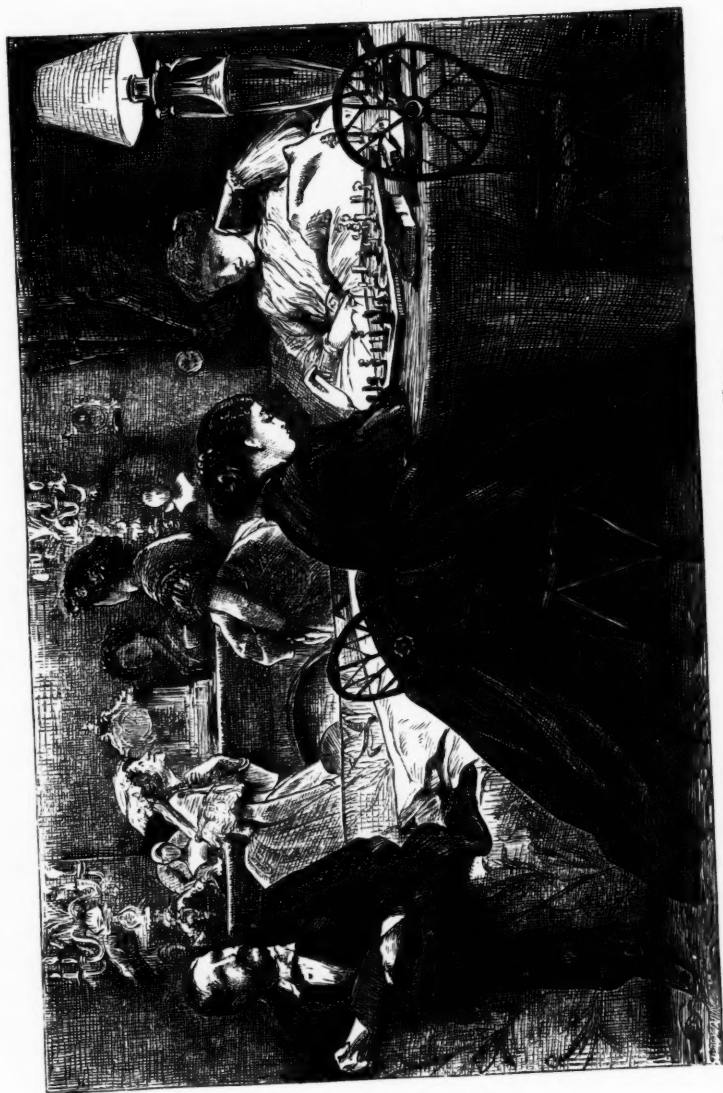
"Oh, aunt Emily! go where?" I exclaimed in utter despair, and feeling ready to cry with fatigue at the bare idea of a move in any direction.

"Olympe has written," began my mother, holding up a thin letter with a yellow stamp upon it.

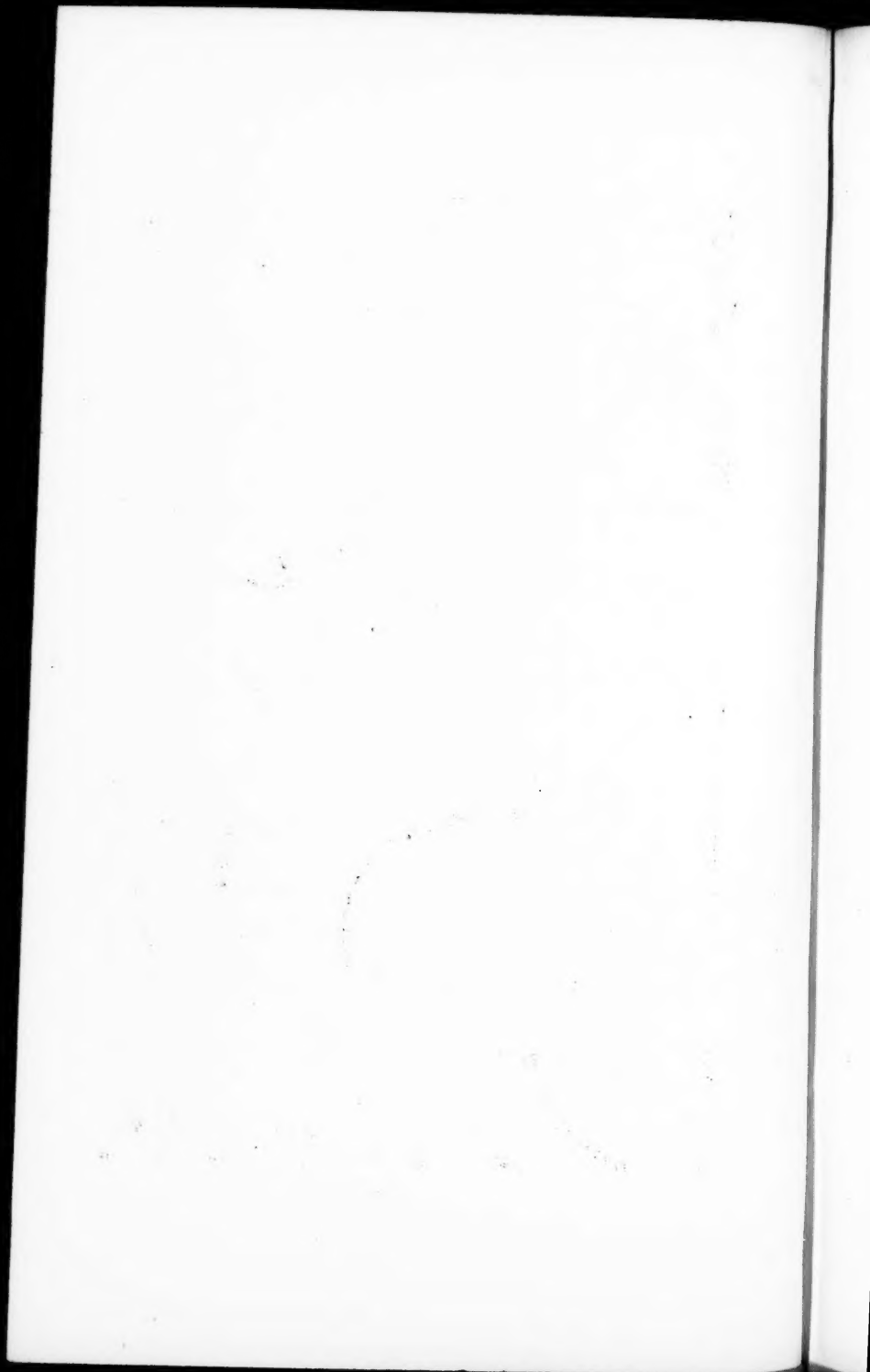
"Yes, and you are to go," once more broke in my impetuous old aunt Emily. The letter was from the Comtesse de Caradec, in answer to one from my poor dear mother,

who it seems had been writing all her alarms about my health to her old friend and pupil; and now, as soon as I could get aunt Emily to promise silence, the letter was read out to me. It was cordial and affectionate, as all her letters are, and contained the kind proposal that I should go over to Marny-les-Monts, and try what a fortnight's entire change would do towards toning me up, and shaking me out of the languor, mental and physical, which had invaded me of late, and against which, for the first time in my life, I felt quite powerless to do battle.

The fact is, that my dear mother's illness, coming as it did, after a most exhausting term of hard work, had quite knocked me down. I had had a good many pupils and one or two schools also to attend during the last season; and the confinement of the life, together with the painful strain upon the nerves, which I suppose teaching music will always be to me, to the end of time, had already left me feeble and in want of rest, when mother was seized, first with bronchitis, then with inflammation of the lungs; and the terrible anxiety about her, combined with all those days spent in her hot room, and all those nights passed by her sick-bed,



AN EVENING IN A FRENCH COUNTRY-HOUSE.



had prostrated me still farther. Then came our move down to aunt Emily's cottage in Devonshire, from which I had hoped wonders; but while it seemed to be bringing mother round beautifully, and making her quite fat and rosy again, I was dwindling away into an absolute shadow; I could not walk a step without violent palpitations; I fainted dead away after being out for ten minutes in the sun, and when aunt Emily spoke a little louder or sharper to me than usual, if it was only to say good morning, I began to cry. It was such a new state of things for me, that my two dear old guardian angels were getting quite troubled about me, and so after a good long discussion and many useless efforts on my part to persuade them to let me stay where I was and be quiet, it was finally decided that Madame de Caradec's kind invitation was to be accepted, and that I was to go abroad for the first time in my life, and see what entire change of air and scene would do for me.

Abroad! everything has been brought so close to one of late years by the increased rapidity of travelling, and every one is so continually on the move in consequence, that nothing short of Australia, or the Himalayas, answers at all now to the important sound of the word "abroad." Italy, Germany, Switzerland, are become as familiar to everybody as Portman Square or Piccadilly, and my "abroad" meant even less than all this: a bit of France just off the high-road—no more—and within ten hours of England; it would take me very little longer to get there than it had taken us to come down to aunt Emily's.

Madame de Caradec's mother was an Englishwoman, but she herself was born in France, and married there, and has always lived there, both before and since her widowhood. Her only brother, who came to her when her husband died, and has remained with her ever since, I had heard of as entirely Anglomane in his tastes and habits. They buy English horses and keep English grooms, and I believe they even prefer English cookery; and she drives her own pony-chaise, and talks English better than I do. Oh, was it worth while to cross that horrid Channel, and no doubt be odiously ill, to go away from my own who love me, among a parcel of strangers, to find only another inferior sort of England? Oh, was it worth while? especially for a single week; for longer I was quite determined I would not stay? I did not say this, however, either to mother or to aunt Emily, for I saw that they had quite set their hearts on the project, and so I submitted with the best grace I was able to muster; saw my new carmelite, my best black silk, and a white muslin for evenings, put into my trunk, and finally, accompanied by old Margery, who had been with us ever since I was born, and who, having also once spent a single week in Paris when she was six years old, was considered likely to "be of use to me" on my journey, I took leave of my dear ones with a weary heart and watery eyes, and set forth upon my travels. I saw my dear mother with her slender figure, her silver hair, and sweet moonlight face, shading her eyes with her hand, and aunt Emily, who looked like a peony with a grizzled crop, both standing in the porch to look after us as long as we



were in sight; but the turn in the road by the Angler's Home soon came, and hid us from each other, and then I felt fairly launched indeed and very desolate.

"Never mind, dear," said Margery, wiping a sympathetic drop from the tip of her pointed red nose. "I know *shpou* means hat."

We crossed on the 18th of October. It was a lovely day, and the steamer was crowded with passengers. It was too fine, and the sea too smooth, for any one to be ill, so I had the ladies' cabin all to myself, which I infinitely preferred to being in the midst of all those unfamiliar faces. I hitched myself up into a very comfortable berth, close to an open port-hole, through which I watched the great green swirls of water glittering in the sun, and the passage did not seem long. When we landed at Boulogne, the sky was so blue, the shops all looked so different; the fishwomen, with their short petticoats and their baskets on their backs, so curious; everything seemed so sparkling and unaccustomed, that I would not get into a carriage, but taking my bag in my hand walked with Margery the few steps from the boat to the station.

"Would you allow me, muddam—porty-bag, muddam?" said a voice at my side. I turned and recognized an Englishman, with a hot and anxious visage, who had just crossed over with us, and who was making for the same destination as ourselves.

"Thank you," I answered; "I can carry it quite easily; it's not at all heavy."

"Oh, Lord, mum!" ejaculated my friend with effusion, "what a blessing it is to hear one's own language again!"

I felt inclined to advise him to venture no farther if he already experienced *mal du pays* to such an extent, but to go back and wait patiently at the pier until the next steamer started for England. We had two blooming young English ladies in our carriage, accompanied by a surly brother in one corner, who was far too satisfied with himself and too discontented with everything else not to have been a freeborn Briton. Just before arriving at the junction where Margery and I were to branch off from the great Paris main line for Marny-les-Monts, "Préparez vos billets, messieurs et mesdames, s'il vous plait," said the conducteur.

"Stoopid ass!" remarked the Englishman, with sullen scorn; "in England they'd have said 'Tickets!' and there'd have been an end of it."

When we arrived at Hautbuisson (the station at which we had to get out), I found that the Countess had expected us by an earlier train, and had sent her carriage to meet us. Not finding us, however, it had gone home again, and we had to wait some time while another vehicle was being procured for us, so that it was already quite dark when we started for Marny-les-Monts—quite too dark to be able to see anything whatever of the scenery around us. I only felt that suddenly our road took us through the yet thicker black of trees; then again we emerged, and rolled and bumped with a muffled sound over a heavy wooden bridge; toiled up a sandy hill to the lights that were glimmering on the summit; heard a

noise of loud voices and foreign tongues all vociferating together; and then I suddenly found myself lifted, I hardly knew how, out of the carriage, and into a tall and potent embrace, enveloped in which I was conveyed along, with my feet hardly reaching the ground, into a brilliant drawing-room. Here a tall gentleman bowed to me, who was presented to me as "my brother Charles." He turned with a kind anxiety to my conductress, and said, "Olympe, what will you do about the dinner?"

"She will dine in her own room," answered the Countess, with despotie melancholy.

"But perhaps she would rather come in with us at once, as we are still at table," he suggested, in a low voice.

"She will dine in her own room," repeated the Countess.

"Are you quite sure that you would like that best?" he again attempted, turning to me.

"She will dine in her own room," imperturbably remarked the Countess, without the slightest shade of difference in her intonation.

I was quite too shy to venture any opinion on the subject myself; moreover, I had an intuitive conviction that it was not expected of me: so, dazed with the sudden light and the new faces, and with the strong arm round me, I was carried, still upon the very tips of my toes, up the staircase, and finally deposited in a cheery little chintz bedroom, where, after a hearty kiss of welcome, I was left, much to my relief, to slip on my dressing-gown, put my feet up, and rest both the spirit and the flesh, which were equally tired out.

Presently, while Margery was arranging my things for the night, the cup of tea, which was all that I had asked for, was brought to me. As I lay with closed lids upon the sofa, I heard Margery say, "Here—on table—tray—put;" as if she thought that broken English, uttered in a very decisive manner, and with a break between each word, answered quite the same purpose as French.

"Does mademoiselle wish for anything else?" inquired the little maid.

"Toody swee," Margery observed, with perfect assurance.

"Do you speak French?" the little maid asked her, with a smile.

"Oh, wee," responded the undaunted Margery, adding "Shpow!" in what I thought rather a menacing way, as she kept nodding her head triumphantly at the girl, and giving sharp taps to her own bonnet, by way of convincing her then and there that she knew what was what.

Fortunately an Irish nurse, who had lived with Madame de Caradec ever since the birth of her daughter, just at this juncture arrived opportunely to the rescue, and Margery, having duly attended to my comfort, was borne off by her new friend to be made comfortable herself.

Later in the evening, just as I had finished writing to mother to tell her of my safe arrival, I heard a quick, decided step coming along the passage, and a hurried little tap at the door. "Come in," I said, and a charming child of about sixteen made her appearance. She was short for her age, but did not look so, from her erect carriage, and from the mag-

nificent way in which her head was set upon her shoulders. She was brilliantly fair, with heaps of golden hair, which she wore turned back from her clear broad forehead. The charm of her face consisted in its great nobility. The expression was one of mixed decision and sweetness; and there was altogether a sort of veiled power about her, which, combined with her childish aspect, made her exceedingly attractive.

"Maman sends me to ask," she said, in her sweet broken English, "will you more tea? or some sirop, perhaps? Have you, indeed, all you want?"

"I see you are Jeanne," said I, holding out my hands to her, and drawing her down on the sofa by my side.

"Yes, I am Jeanne," she replied in French. "I had been out with the hounds all day, and was late for dinner, and dressing in a hurry when you came; that was why you did not see me when you arrived. But Maman was there, I hope, and Charles, and René, to receive you?"

"I saw one gentleman in the drawing-room—your uncle Charles, I believe."

"Yes," said Jeanne; "that was the Marquis."

"And who is René?" asked I.

"René is a cousin of Maman's, who comes here to hunt for three months every winter. De Saldes is his other name—René de Saldes. He always does what he pleases, and is never in time for anything. But the Marquis has to mind his *p's* and *q's*, or hm—hm!" and she screwed up her mouth and shook her head with a funny little sagacious expression.

"And you," said I, laughing, "are not obliged to mind your *p's* and *q's*, but come down when you like?"

"That depends," she answered. "When René comes out with us, I never get a scolding: there is a sort of complicated family machinery about it all, that it is a little difficult to understand at first. I protect the Marquis, and René protects me: not, indeed, that I need much protection; for they all of them spoil me very perfectly in their different ways, and Maman most of all, although she affects to bring me up with the utmost severity. But I must go now, for Maman desired me not to stay and tire you with my gossiping. I hunt to-morrow with our own hounds; but I shall have the pleasure of seeing you at breakfast before we go."

Then bidding me good-night, she left me to the enjoyment of the most perfect bed that ever rested weary limbs.

The next morning I was awoke by feeling something indescribably soft, cool, and fragrant touching my cheek; and I opened my eyes into a large bunch of dewy, fresh-gathered roses. Madame Olympe was standing by my bedside with a heap of exquisite flowers in her hands, with which she proceeded to deck the jars on the chimney-piece and on the table.

She looked very grand and beautiful, enveloped from head to foot in a great white burnous, which fell in thick heavy folds round her stately person, and was altogether a most satisfactory morning vision, with the white hood over her head shading and softening her stern face, as she

bent over her many-coloured treasures and arranged them silently. When she had filled the vases, she came and sat down on the foot of my bed.

"How are you," she said, "after your journey? rested? It was much better for you to dine in your own room—you would have felt shy and uncomfortable the first evening with strangers."

"Have you people staying with you now?" I inquired.

"Yes: we have René de Saldes, Monsieur Kiowski, and Monsieur Berthier. The first is my cousin, the last two are painter friends of mine. They will amuse you, they make such a contrast to each other. The one is so rapid in everything he does, and the other so slow. When they come together their differences not only appear more pronounced, but actually become so. They act unconsciously upon each other, and Monsieur Kiowski rushes on like a small mill-stream, while Monsieur Berthier takes an hour to say the slightest thing. I am also expecting some time to-day Lady Blankeney and her daughter, and Miss Hamilton."

"My dear Madame Olympe," said I, "I should never have had the courage to come if I had thought to find so many people here."

"Oh," she answered, "you needn't feel at all alarmed: there is only one person to be frightened at in the whole lot, and that is Miss Hamilton. Lady Blankeney is only a harmless, silly sort of little old fly: if you will but let her flutter and buzz, she will be quite content; she does all the talking herself. I rather like it and never think of answering her; and Maria is the quietest of the quiet, and properest of the proper—pure English growth—a bashful, blushing, infantile old maid of nine-and-thirty—the thing don't exist with us. They are both great bores, and I am sorry they should happen to be coming just at this particular time, because I should have liked you to become acquainted with René de Saldes, and he is already gone; knowing they were to be here to-day, he fled early in the morning. I am rather curious to see how they will make it out with Ursula Hamilton; she must startle Lady Blankeney occasionally, I should think."

"What is the tie between them? Is she any relation of theirs?" I inquired.

"There is a sort of distant cousinship," answered Madame Olympe. "Miss Hamilton's father had once a good fortune, which he squandered in every conceivable discreditable way, and then went to live for economy, with his little girl, at Florence. He died some time ago, and Ursula was left all but destitute. She then, to the horror of all her friends, announced her intention of going on the stage, for which, it appears, she has an immense natural talent—when suddenly, by the greatest piece of unlooked-for good luck in the world, a rich old aunt of hers died, and bequeathed her a very large sum of money. So, thank goodness, she gave up (though I do believe it was rather *à contre-cœur*) the notion of singing in public, and Lady Blankeney, who had been in Italy during all her troubles, and carelessly ignored both her and them, flew to her the instant she became an heiress, and is now convoying her to England, where she means to

have the honour and glory of producing the new lioness in fashionable society. I own I'm rather curious to see them together, for ages ago I used to hear about Ursula Hamilton from my cousin, Monsieur de Saldes, who knew her abroad, and she appeared to be anything but an amenable subject, although at that time she was only fifteen or sixteen. But I shall leave you to dress now—you needn't hurry, for we don't breakfast till half-past eleven."

With that she nodded her head in a friendly way, and strode majestically out of the room.

I had been so thoroughly roused by Madame Olympe's visit, that I got up as soon as she had left me. I unfastened those delicious French windows that open from top to bottom, and seem to let all heaven and earth at once into the room, threw back the outer jalousies, and feasted my eyes upon the landscape. Before me lay the park (a bit of land redeemed from the heart of the forest, and cleared for the dwelling of my hostess) dotted all over with clumps of trees: here and there little screens of delicate young poplars, already turned by the season, quivered their golden leaves in the clear splendours of the autumn blue. At the bottom of the hill lay the river, of which my room commanded three different views as it turned and wound about, all glittering and rippling, and covered, as it were, with an ever-vibrating network of light; and beyond, stretching up and on for miles and miles around us, was the great ocean of the forest, drenched in deep dews, steeped in warm sunshine, swaying in the sweet morning freshness, and chanting its solemn hymn of gladness to the Lord of all the beauties of the earth.

When I was dressed, I went into the drawing-room, where I found Madame Olympe, still in the same picturesque costume, assiduously dusting the books upon the table with a feather brush. "This is not much like England after all," thought I.

"We have a new servant," she said in a plaintive tone of voice, "who never touches a thing in the morning, and so I am obliged to go round myself and see to it."

"Why, what does she do?" I inquired; "lie in bed till this hour?"

"The she is a he, whose name is Hyacinthe, and that is what he does!" she answered, pointing with her brush to the chandelier.

I looked up; it was a quaint edifice, built entirely of stags' heads and antlers carved in wood, and it was filled from top to bottom with flowers and leaves grouped together in the loveliest way.

"Look there—and there," she said.

I glanced round the room; in every corner there were heaps and heaps of flowers arranged, with every variety of sword-like rush and feathery plume of grass.

"Would you like to see the artist himself? There he is!" she continued, opening the door which led out into the hall. Beyond the hall was a large portico, fitted up with sofas and chairs, and here, at a table covered with flowers, sat a short fat man with a turn-up nose, pasty face,

and sentimental aspect, dressing a couple of huge vases. These he afterwards brought in and placed triumphantly upon the chimney-piece; they were entirely filled with the most delicate ferns, intermingled with dark ivy-leaves, which fell over and round the jars in garlands of exquisite grace.

At breakfast I was introduced to Monsieur Berthier, a gentleman who looked about fifty-five years old. He was fair, rather bald, and had the gentlest voice and manner in the world. He very kindly endeavoured to put me at my ease by speaking to me in English, but his pronunciation was so peculiar that I could hardly understand what he said—which made me much more nervous than I was before. However, they all soon found out that I spoke French without difficulty, and then we got on swimmingly.

Monsieur Charles appeared in full hunting costume. He did not wear the green, which is the colour of the Imperial hunt, but a white coat with maroon velvet facings: it was extremely picturesque, and very becoming to pretty little Jeanne, who was charmingly got up in the same colours.

They called this morning meal their breakfast, but it was to all intents and purposes a regular dinner. There were two large dishes of hot meat, two or three others of cold, hot dressed vegetables, salad, eggs, and all served upon the bare oak table without any table-cloth. At the end where Madame Olympe sat, were the urn and breakfast-service; but I observed that everybody drank wine-and-water to begin with, and then gradually arrived at tea as a sort of climax, when a most delicious hot heavy pastrycake was handed round, which they ate with an addition of butter and honey that made me expect to see them die on their chairs by my side. It is but fair to add that this breakfast and their dinner are the only meals partaken of in the day. The servants have their breakfast and dinner immediately after their masters have done, upon what is left; the whole domestic machinery seems to me much simpler than our English arrangements. French servants do not eat or drink half so much as ours do, and make much fewer difficulties. What complicates matters in England a good deal is the separate life led by the children: this does not exist in France, where the children keep for the most part the same hours with their parents, instead of dining apart and early, as ours do.

While we were in the middle of breakfast a figure darted past the window, gesticulating violently—this I found was Monsieur Kiowski, who had been out painting and had not heard the breakfast-bell. Presently he rushed in with his sketch-book in his hand: he was quite young, and very pleasant-looking.

"Mille pardons!" he said, hurrying up to Madame Olympe and kissing her hand. "I hadn't any idea it was so late, but I found the most adorable little bit to paint from the boat-house! When first I got there it was all cool grays and silver tones—a perfect Corot—with just that little bit of dead tree coming in there you see" (showing her the book) "to give it a red accent; but when the sun came out the whole aspect altered from minute to minute, so that I was obliged to give it up at last. I must try and get up early again to-morrow to finish it if possible. Good-

morning, Jeanne. Good-morning, Marquis. Good-morning, Berthier. Why didn't you come out and have a go at the river too? You have no idea how lovely it looked from the inside of the boat-house; but perfectly adorable!" (and he sent a kiss into the air rapturously from the tip of his fingers). "Yes, some *pommes de terre sautées*, Hyacinthe, if you please."

All this came pelting out in a torrent of French, and in a single breath, and I was perfectly dumfounded when Madame Olympe presented him to me, and he asked me in equally faultless English if I had had a good night and was rested after my journey?

"Mademoiselle does not look as if she had crossed the sea yesterday: were you ill?" asked Monsieur Berthier in his slow gentle way. "I think the English character never comes out more strongly than on board a steamboat," he continued. "The feeling of *decency—le convenable*—is what English people never lose sight of—English women more especially: even the tortures of sea-sickness they manage to control, and retire to some secluded corner with their basin, hoping to shroud from observation an attitude which no amount of will can render graceful or dignified. I saw a vulgar Spaniard once, when I was crossing over to England: he had been making game of a poor Meess, who, with English forethought, had provided herself with a basin before the vessel started. He straddled about on deck with a great chain and a gaudy cane, and said in a swaggering way, 'Look at all these poor wretches who are determined to be ill! Their precautions are exactly what makes them so; they are afraid, and give in, and of course are sick immediately; but if one walks up and down as I do, and smokes as I do, and sings as I do, one is never ill.' He began executing some roudades as the boat steamed out of harbour; the sea was terrible, and before ten minutes were over, my Spaniard, who had suddenly lapsed into ominous silence and gradually become of a hue the like of which I never beheld before or since on any human countenance, uttered a discordant shriek, and made a violent plunge at a basin he saw upon a bench near him—the ship lurched, the basin rolled off, and he rolled after it and lay wallowing there on the ground where he fell, an utterly demoralized and disgusting object; but so miserable and so regardless of all appearances that I assure you he became almost grand through excess of suffering, and the entire absence of self-consciousness. Meess, with her basin in her corner, and all her British dignity, was *little* by the side of that Spaniard in the agony of his utter self-abandonment."

We all laughed, but Madame Olympe took the English side of the question and stood up for it very vigorously. Monsieur Berthier turned to me.

"Confess that you went downstairs and tried to hide yourself from every one; you would not be English if you had not done this. I remember at one time of my life having to pass every day the English pastrycook's at the corner of the Rue de Rivoli. I used to see the English Misses there eating cakes, and when I looked in at the window at them (for they were almost always pretty) they took a crumb at a time, but



when I passed on, and they thought they were not seen any more, they put enormous pieces into their mouths, and ate with as much voracity as other people. I used to amuse myself with pretending to go by, and then coming back stealthily to watch them from the corner of the window, and they always did the same."

"Well," said Monsieur Kiowski, "and very right too: you seem to think it ridiculous and unpoetical, but after all, it shows a regard for the feelings of others, and a certain sense of beauty too, which in my humble opinion are qualities rather than defects."

André now came to say that the horses were at the door, and we all went out upon the perron to see them start. Jeanne embraced her mother, and the Marquis kissed his sister's hand before they mounted. The horses were English, and very handsome beasts, and the Marquis's tall slight figure in his gay uniform, and with his great hunting-horn slung over his shoulder, looked uncommonly well as they passed in and out through the trees, with the sun shining full upon them. How I envied them their ride,—I, who could not even walk!

"I am sorry I cannot drive you to the meet to-day," said Madame Olympe to me, "because these people are coming. However, you must see it one day before you go; it is very different from the English hunting, but it is very pretty in the forest, and we can follow it perfectly in a carriage and see all the sport."

While we were still standing on the perron watching the receding figures as they went down the hill, we saw a little black object with a white head-dress flitting swiftly towards the house. As she came nearer to us, I saw that it was a Sister of Charity.

"It is the *Sœur Marie*," said Madame Olympe, going forward to meet her. "The school-children are under her direction and she is the good angel of the neighbouring village. Good-morning, my sister. Are you come to see me about the school-feast, or to tell me of some of your poor people who want help? Will you not come in and have some breakfast?"

"Oh, no, Madame la Comtesse," said the little sister. "I breakfasted long ago; besides, I must not eat such dainty things as you would give me in your goodness: my wicked body must be mortified, and I must keep a tight rein over the sinful appetites of the flesh."

We could hardly help laughing at this speech proceeding from the mouth of the poor sister. She was a spare, small old creature, mere skin and bone, with a pale childish toothless face, small brown watery eyes, and a feeble beseeching voice. Her whole figure had something eager, anxious, and imploring, in its expression, and her quick gait and restless activity, combined with the flutter of her draperies, and a way she had of leaning slightly forward, always somehow gave her the appearance of flying.

"Well, but a glass of wine and a little bit of cake, my sister—at least that after your long walk? Surely that comes under the head of necessary sustenance?"

"No, no, my dear lady," answered the little sister, with childish

earnestness ; " I must wrestle with temptation, and overthrow my rebellious passions."

" And why are you not more warmly clad, *Sœur Marie* ? " continued *Madame Olympe*. " The day is treacherous—warm in the sun and cold in the shade. What have you done with the woollen handkerchief I gave you to keep those little bones of yours warm ? "

" Oh, *Madame la Comtesse* must not be angry," said the little creature, looking imploringly up in her face, " but old *Nanon* has had her rheumatism so badly of late, that I gave it to her. *Madame* knows how I value her kindness, but the poor *Nanon* was so suffering, and, for the moment, I really had no use for it."

" That is always the way," said *Madame Olympe*, turning to me ; " she never keeps anything for herself. However, I do hope that the india-rubber bottle which you brought over for me will be of some comfort to her during the winter ; perhaps, as that is neither food nor clothing, I may be able to persuade her to keep it."

She then sent for one of those india-rubber bags which she had begged me to bring from England for her, and when the servant had fetched it she gave it to the old sister, saying, " Here, my sister, is something to make you comfortable in the winter."

*Sœur Marie* took it with overflowing gratitude, but evidently without having the slightest idea what was to be done with it, or how it was to be made use of. *Madame Olympe* watched her for a minute or two, and then, finding that she was too timid and humble to make any inquiry, she proceeded to explain to her the method of unscrewing it, putting in the hot water, and screwing it up again. *Sœur Marie* was in an ecstasy of delight.

" There ! " said *Madame Olympe*. " On cold winter nights, when it is full of nice hot water, and you are in bed, my sister, you see you can clap it here—or here—or here—or just wherever you please ! " and she whisked it about all over her own body as she spoke, with a droll unconsciousness, and a dear, benevolent beaming face, quite unlike any expression I had thought her countenance capable of. It was charming to see her unbend so completely, and become so sweet and tender to the poor flittering little nun.

Presently they went in together, to talk over a feast that *Madame de Caradec* was going to give the school-children, and *Monsieur Berthier* and I went strolling slowly round the house.

It was quite the most enjoyable dwelling I ever was in : I believe, from the fact that it was entirely devoid of any pretension to architectural importance. Wherever a pretty view or sunny aspect invited one to sit, and look or bask, as the case might be, great wide balconies had been thrown out, with awnings moveable at pleasure ; in other places, there were cool verandahs, with seats, for those who preferred the shade. I expressed my approbation of the exterior of the house to *Monsieur Berthier*. Just then a *jalousie* was thrown vehemently open, and *Monsieur Kiowski's* head appeared at the window above us.

" You have delicious weather for your little walk," he remarked to me,

with great urbanity; then in French to Monsieur Berthier,—“I envy you, mon cher; you, who are able to enjoy your holiday in peace.”

“I think I have some little right to enjoy it,” returned the other; “I have earned it by working hard enough, I am sure. I was grinding away at the wheel until the very last moment before I came here.”

“But at all events,” said Monsieur Kiowski, “when you have done, you have done. Monsieur has given his lessons, Monsieur walks, Monsieur talks, Monsieur takes his leisure; while I, after working like a galley-slave in order to get the underpainting of my picture done before coming over, have brought with me two drawings, which I am absolutely obliged to finish by the end of this week, besides any quantity of letters which I have always delayed answering, from a futile idea that I should find time at Marny-les-Monts for everything I wanted to do. What a lovely day it is!” He then again said to me in English,—“How I should like to come down and bask in the sun!”

“Why don’t you come? what is it that you are doing at the present moment?” I asked rather satirically.

“Writing my letters,” he answered with perfect naïveté, leaning his arms upon the window-sill and looking out at us.

“Well,” said Monsieur Berthier, as we walked on, “and the interior of the house? You do not say what impression that makes upon you?”

“I have been here such an instant of time,” I answered, “that I hardly dare trust my own impressions. How striking little Jeanne is! She seems to me like a clasped book: if ever I get the clasps open I’m sure that I shall like what I shall read; but she is not easy to know, and I should think did not readily attach herself to strangers. However, she is exactly what I expected to find her, from all her mother had written about her to my mother.”

“And Madame de Caradec,” he continued, “is she also what you expected to find her?”

“No,” said I, laughing, “for I was told that she was rather imposing, and I find her positively alarming, and I was told that she had been handsome and I think her perfectly beautiful still—don’t you?”

“I see that you are very impressionable,” he said, smiling at my enthusiasm, “but of course I see her differently who have known her from her childhood. Ah! that first youth! how beautiful it is! It has a charm—a mystery—so soon lost, and that nothing afterwards, however fine, can compensate for!—at least such is my opinion. You think her beautiful now: then just imagine what she must have been at sixteen, when I first knew her. She was a famous beauty then, I assure you! You know I was her drawing-master, and I shall never forget the day that I gave her her first lesson. I went there never yet having seen her, and I was perfectly bewildered (I too was young then) when I beheld this vision of heavenly beauty before me! Madame your mother was sitting working in the room at the time. I knew her very well—Madame Hope and I were great friends.”

"I have constantly heard mother say so," said I, "and it has been a real delight to me to come among the people I have so often heard her speak of with affection. But did Madame de Caradec always look as proud and sad as she does now?" I inquired.

"No," answered Monsieur Berthier. "That expression came with trouble and with time: it dates back to an old story of disappointed attachment. Did Madame Hope never mention Monsieur Hamilton to you?" he asked, after a slight pause. "He used to come to the house a great deal during the time that she was in France. Well, it was for him that Madame de Caradec once had a very profound sentiment. He made no sign, however, of any corresponding feeling, beyond seeming to admire her very much; so much, indeed, that everybody was quite surprised that he did not come forward and offer to marry her, but he did not, and it was then that she first began to look proud and hard. She remained single—courted, followed, and adored as she was, until she was seven-and-twenty; and then, to the amazement of every one, as you may conceive, she suddenly chose from among all her suitors the old Comte de Caradec, who was at least sixty when she accepted him. He was a charming old man, and very fond and proud of her, and I think she might have been happy, or at all events tolerably contented with her life, if unluckily at her father's death (which took place seven or eight years after she was married) she had not found amongst his papers a letter from her old love, declaring his feeling for her, and containing a proposal of marriage. They had kept it from her—never consulted her—never even given her the little comfort of knowing that he had really cared for her. After this discovery, she had a long dangerous illness, through which her poor old husband nursed her with the tenderest devotion; but though through his care she eventually recovered, everything like happiness was at an end, and she became at once and for ever the stern melancholy woman that you see her now."

"And what became of Colonel Hamilton?" I inquired, eagerly.

"Oh, the brilliant colonel went abroad and ran away with an Italian prima donna, who died soon after, leaving him an only daughter: that is the Miss Hamilton who is coming to-day. I shall be very glad to see her again—I used to see a great deal of her at Florence."

"What sort of man was Colonel Hamilton?" said I. "Were you acquainted with him?"

"Yes," answered Monsieur Berthier. "He passed a considerable portion of his time in Paris; but I own he always appeared to me to be perfectly uninteresting."

"Was he handsome?" said I.

"He was thought so in the fashionable world," he replied; "and I have observed that that is a thing which always goes a very long way with your sex; they seldom have the courage to admire what is not generally admired by the women of their acquaintance. I confess I thought him rather insignificant-looking myself; he used to dress in the most exaggerated height

of the fashion, and always looked as if he had just walked out of the *Journal des Modes*.

"But," said I, "surely there must have been something remarkable about him to make a woman of that character care for him so much. Was he clever in any way, or amusing?"

"No," answered Monsieur Berthier; "he was dull, unoriginal, and commonplace; and I own I never myself could understand the attraction he had for her." Here he paused and looked at the landscape, and then added with a gentle sigh,— "Perhaps she had seen him in his uniform."

We were passing once more under Monsieur Kiowski's window, and he popped out his head again.

"Have you been as far as the stables, Miss Hope?" he inquired.

I told him that I had not yet, whereupon he addressed Monsieur Berthier.

"Monsieur Berthier, have you seen the stables since you have been here this time? There is a Virginia creeper already turned crimson, growing up the wall, and all over the roof, which is too wonderfully beautiful! That crimson against the stone-colour, and the red of the leaf upon the red of the tiles, makes the most divine harmony I ever beheld!"

"Will you go and see it?" said Monsieur Berthier to me.

I was beginning to feel rather tired, so I declined.

"I advise you to go and see that, mon cher," continued Monsieur Kiowski; "it is marvellously fine. There!" he said, craning his neck out of the window, until I was afraid he would fall. "When I stretch out like that, I just get a corner of the foliage gleaming like rubies against the blue sky." He then held up his hand to try the value of the flesh-coloured tone against the light, and added to me—"What a delicious air, to be sure! *un venticello che consola!* I really think I must come down."

"Why don't you?" said I, once more. "Are you working very hard at the present moment?"

*Hélas!*" said he, with a sigh.

"What at?" asked I.

"At one of my drawings," he answered quite seriously.

"Do tell me," I inquired of Monsieur Berthier, "of what nation Monsieur Kiowski is?"

"English," he replied; "of Polish origin, I fancy, but his family is English, and so is he.

"Is not his French quite wonderful?" said I.

"Yes," he answered, "but not more so, I believe, than his Italian and German. I have heard Germans say they should have taken him for a German."

"Ah! imagine what happens to me!" screamed Madame Olympe from the house; "such a telegram from Lady Blankeney!"

She hurried out in fits of laughter, with the paper in her hand. It was as follows:—

"Lady Blankeney, Hôtel Bristol, Paris, to Madame la Comtesse de

Caradec, à Marny-les-Monts, près Champenay, Oise. Dearest Countess—in despair—we bring a fiddler—too dreadful—so shocked—pardon.”

“One of Ursula’s queer artist friends evidently,” said Madame Olympe, “or Lady Blankeney would not have thought it necessary to apologize: some ill-combed genius that she has picked up abroad and brought along with her, no doubt. The question is, where on earth I am to lodge him? I haven’t a corner to spare; I have been obliged to put Madame Simon, the housekeeper, who is ill, into Jeanne’s room, in order to give her more air; and Jeanne already sleeps with me. There would be René’s room, but then he is so uncertain that I never dare make use of it—he might get bored in Paris, you know,” turning to Monsieur Berthier, “and come back at any moment. There’s no use in telegraphing back to say I can’t take the fiddler in, for they must already have started. Monsieur Kiowski only goes away on Wednesday; what on earth am I to do?”

“Dear Madame Olympe,” said I, “do pray make some use of my room. I see that there is a sofa-bed in it; why shouldn’t you put Miss Blankeney or Miss Hamilton into my bed and let me sleep on that? You know the *cabinet de toilette* affords every sort of convenience for double dressing.”

This was an obvious arrangement to propose. My room was large and cheery, with only the bed in it to prevent it from looking like a pretty sitting-room, and beyond, opening into it, there was another smaller room, with all the washing and dressing appurtenances kept completely to themselves.

“You save my life!” said Madame Olympe. “Miss Blankeney is frightened to death if she is not quite close to her mother; but Ursula was to have had the little room next to yours. We will stick the fiddler in there, and put Ursula up with you, since you are good enough to have her. She shall sleep on the sofa, though—I won’t have you turned out of your comfortable bed for any one. And now come in, for you are looking quite exhausted, and you must put your feet up upon the sofa.”

She took me in, and established me, in spite of the feeble remonstrance I ventured to make, upon a wonderful sort of gigantic double sofa that stood in the drawing-room, midway between the fire-place and an oriel window, which commanded a lovely view of the river and the forest. She arranged the pillows for me, and then went out into the hall and brought back a soft shawl, with which she wrapped my feet round as tenderly as mother would, looking all the while so grand, and stately, and abstracted, that I was quite confused, and felt as though I were being waited upon by some great queen.

She went to the piano, opened it, and began one of Beethoven’s sonatas. She played with a good deal of power and feeling, and with an evident love of her subject. I listened in enchantment. Monsieur Berthier took a book and sat down in a corner, but I saw that he was looking from underneath his eyebrows much oftener at her than at his book.

While she was still playing, a carriage drove up to the door, and Lady Blankeney was announced. I was going to get up from the sofa, when Madame Olympe, who had left the piano, put me down again with a strong arm, and saying in an imperative voice, "Don't move! don't move!" held me there steadily till the whole party had entered the room. First came a short thin old lady, fashionably dressed in a brown gown and pink bonnet; then a tall woman in a complete travelling suit of grays, with fair hair and projecting teeth, and then a young lady with a sallow face and large black eyes: she was dressed in black, and was closely followed by a little pale miserable-looking mortal, muffled from head to foot in a long great-coat, and with a huge comforter rolled two or three times round his throat.

"How d'ye *do*, dear Madame de Caradec! How d'ye *do*! Here we all are at last! Is that the princess?" she said, in a low voice, looking at me; "so delightful to find her still here! Pray present me. I shall be so charmed to make her acquaintance!"

"It isn't the princess," said Madame Olympe, rather drily; "it's only Miss Hope, my old governess's daughter." At which piece of information all the smiles vanished in an instant from Lady Blankeney's countenance, and she looked carefully in another direction.

"Miss Hamilton," said Madame Olympe, going up to the young lady in black, "I am glad to see you at Marny."

"And I to be here," answered a full contralto voice, with a remarkably distinct utterance. "This is Monsieur Dessaix," she continued, introducing her friend. "He has come all the way from Germany to see me, and if I had not brought him along with me, I must have stayed behind myself, so I hope you will forgive the liberty I have taken."

Madame Olympe bowed slightly, and so did the little man. He and Miss Hamilton were standing close together at the head of the sofa, and presently I heard him say to her in a low querulous voice,—

"My angel, I am suffocating!"

"Take off your comforter then, you stupid old owl," she answered, in a whisper.

"It will have a much better air if I wait till I go upstairs—but I am suffocating!"

"Then suffocate," she said, and went off into a giggle.

"Do not laugh, I entreat of thee," he continued; "thou wilt make me ridiculous before all these people; thy young friend with the teeth detests me already; if she could kill me she would. Well! what is going to be done now?" he continued, looking round with a discontented air; "is everybody going away? Ah, pour l'amour de Dieu, ne me laisse pas seul avec la morte!" This last was said in a sudden agonized whisper, as he saw Miss Hamilton preparing to follow the other ladies out of the room, but his terror made it quite audible, and "the morte" could not help laughing too. They then all went out together to take a turn in the grounds, and I remained lying on my sofa, rather tired, a little puzzled, and very much diverted.



I lay there and thought my thoughts, and looked out at the forest, and the river, and the sky, and as the time drew on I saw the water grow blood-red with the reflection of sunset clouds, and the trees grow darker and darker in the clear heavens, until at last they stood cut out in a thousand delicate and fantastic shapes in perfect black against the golden evening air. Then all the various hues melted and deepened together into one strange passionate amber twilight; a magical sound of horns playing in concert came dimly up out of lost distances, then a pleasant noise of voices and of horses' hoofs coming slowly up the hill, and presently Jeanne made her appearance followed by Hyacinthe and the lamp, and all the dreams vanished away with the bright light.

They had had famous sport and she was in high spirits. "You mustn't let me dawdle and chatter too long," she said, as she came and sat on a footstool by the side of the sofa, "or I shall be late for dinner again. The Marquis wanted badly to take a walk in the garden, but Maman has sent him to his room to get ready, and I must be in time too, as we have no René to-day to fall back upon."

"Are you sorry he is gone?" said I.

"I believe so!" was the emphatic answer.

"Tell me about him," said I. "What is he like? At all like your uncle Charles?"

She laughed. "Oh, no! nothing was ever more different. Why, Charles is not at all handsome—at least I suppose people wouldn't think him so, though I like his looks. His features are not particularly good I daresay; but he has a distinguished air for all that, which I care for a great deal more. Now about René there cannot be two opinions; he is simply magnificent."

Her funny little decided manner made me smile. "And what is he besides—amiable and kind?"

"No," said Jeanne; "he is certainly not amiable, and I am not quite sure that he is very kind. It is my poor Marquis that is all this. He does himself so little justice, and is so simple and unpretending, that one has to live with him before one finds out all the goodness that he keeps hidden away under a bushel. His kindness to the poor is inconceivable, and his courtesy of manner to them—I never saw any one with such delicate consideration as he has for all those who are in an inferior position to himself. Then no one is so sincere as he, or of such scrupulous niceness in all matters of honour; and as for his tact, it is unequalled, and would alone render him easy and agreeable to live with. René, at bottom, rather looks down upon him. René is travelled, and learned, and artistic, and interesting—above all, interesting; that is the very word for him. But he never thinks much about anybody, that I can see, except himself: and yet somehow, I don't know why, one can't help having a feeling of immense respect for him; I suppose, because he has always the air of despising one so—it gives one immediately a morbid desire after his approbation and notice. It is a great thing for us to have him come here

in the winters ; we should fall back into the benighted state of the middle ages, and do nothing but kill our hogs and eat them, if it were not for him ! He keeps us all up to the mark. I always read up to him when he is coming, and we never dare shut an eye of an evening ; and Maman dresses herself properly, and puts on no more gowns that were made in the year one ; and Charles does not make any dirty jokes ; and even the cook sends up superhuman dinners when he is at Marny ! Do you understand him at all from my description ? ”

“ I am afraid,” I answered, “ that what I do understand I should not very much like.”

“ Oh, you couldn’t help liking him ! ” she interrupted. “ One must feel drawn to him when he smiles his little tired smile, and looks sadly at one with those charming eyes of his.”

“ Why does he look unhappy ? ” I inquired ; “ has he had troubles ? ”

“ O dear, no ! ” said Jeanne ; “ he has always been very prosperous. Maman says he is sad because he has always his own way ; but yet she, like every one else, gives it to him. The Marquis fights, and struggles, and contends, and always goes to the wall, repulsed with loss ; while with René it is just the reverse—he never discusses, and never submits.”

The clock struck half-past seven, and we hurried upstairs. I went into my *cabinet de toilette*, which possessed a door giving into the corridor, as well as the one opening into the bedroom, and dressed for dinner, leaving the larger room for Miss Hamilton. I made haste, and got down before she did, and was sitting in the drawing-room with the others when she came in.

I was perfectly amazed at the transformation that dress and lamplight made in her. I had thought her all but plain on her arrival ; now she appeared to me one of the most striking-looking persons I had ever seen. All the positive beauty of the face lay in the upper part. Large dark powerful eyes with heavy lids, almost always half-closed, gave her a most peculiar expression. Her eyelashes were the longest and thickest I ever beheld. They curled up at the ends, and stood out beyond her nose, as one looked at her in profile. Her eyebrows were coal-black and perfectly straight, and lay like a bar across her broad pale forehead, on which great masses of crisp black hair grew very low. She had a small, delicately shaped nose, with sensitive nostrils ; her upper lip was too long, and her mouth, which was thin, had a perpetual sarcastic motion, which was strange, and not agreeable, in one so young. Her complexion was bad, and she had little or no colour ; but the skin, which looked yellow and dingy in the morning, became a sort of wonderful cream-colour by candle-light. Her figure was perfectly magnificent, and there was a picturesqueness in all her movements which made it a delight to be in the room with her. I suppose I should have thought her tall in any other house, for she told me that she was five foot seven ; but Madame Olympe was five foot ten, and anyhow no one had a chance of looking tall where she was.

The dinner went off well, and was extremely amusing. There had been a slight difficulty about the order of our going in. Of course Monsieur Charles had to take in Lady Blankeney; Madame Olympe then said, "Where is Monsieur Dessaix? He was here not a minute ago."

Monsieur Dessaix looked about forty; he was at all events considerably older than Monsieur Kiowski. He therefore was to have been Miss Blankeney's partner; but just at the moment that he was called for by Madame Olympe, I saw him stoop down and hide behind a large arm-chair, from which place of refuge, as soon as he saw Monsieur Kiowski invested with his honours and conveying the fair Maria safely in to dinner, he emerged, and quietly offered his arm to Ursula. Jeanne and I went in together, leaving Monsieur Berthier for Madame Olympe. Fortunately her head had been turned the other way, and I don't think any one but Miss Hamilton and I were the wiser for the manoeuvre which had just been performed.

"Dost thou find me changed since thou sawest me last?" said Monsieur Dessaix to Miss Hamilton, with a melancholy air.

The table was round and the party small, so that every one was more or less within earshot of all that passed. I saw the sharp look of amazed disapprobation which came over Madame Olympe's face as, for the first time, the *thee* and *thou* which had surprised me, attracted her attention. I saw that she was riveted—evidently for a moment thinking that she must have heard amiss; but the answer did not keep us long waiting—it came ringing out distinctly in Miss Hamilton's grave tones:—

"What change dost thou expect me to find in thee, Jacques? Thy hair has not turned white in five weeks' time."

"No," said he; "but it has fallen off dreadfully during those five weeks. Dost thou see how bald I am becoming?"

"I have observed," said Monsieur Berthier to me, "that men become bald much more frequently than women. One can hardly enter a room where there are a few persons assembled, without seeing some man with a bald head. If you look round the table here, you will see that out of the four male heads present there are three already bald: Monsieur Charles, Monsieur Dessaix, and myself. Of course there must be some reason for a fact which there is no disputing, and I have always attributed it to the work of thought which goes continually on in the brain of man."

"Ah, my old enemy!" cried Ursula, from the other side of the table. "We don't think, do we?"

"No, I do not quite say that," he answered, laughing gently; "but you will allow that women's thoughts are generally occupied with less weighty considerations: much of the child's nature enters into the composition of woman. And note well that this is no accusation; on the contrary, it is one of your greatest charms, in my opinion, and it is that quality which gives you the power of relaxing and reposing the mind of man when it is weary with solving the serious problems of life."

"Belle vocation!" said she, and down went the corners of her mouth.

"As for the problems of life, not to me, nor to you either, will it be given to solve them, my dear Berthier."

"Monsieur Dessaix, what will you eat?" asked Madame Olympe, seeing that his plate was empty.

"Some of that little corpse if you please, Madame la Comtesse," he answered feebly, pointing to a fowl that looked very white in the middle of brown gravy.

Jeanne gave one wild compressed look at Monsieur Charles, hastily seized some water, and exploded in her glass with a tremendous noise.

"I am not laughing—I am not laughing—I am not laughing," said Madame Olympe, with menacing sternness.

"I perceive," said I, turning to Monsieur Berthier, "that you think us greatly inferior to men."

"Don't talk to him, Miss Hope," said Ursula; "he has the worst opinion of us. Oh, I know him of old!"

"I assure you this is not so," he replied, with gentle slowness. "I think very highly of certain qualities which you possess, and I even find great charm in your society; but I must own that in the matter of the intellect, I cannot help observing that heaven has gifted men in a manner which has been denied to your sex. What woman has ever brought to perfection any serious work? Come, let us see—let us compare. It is only by comparing that one can arrive at the truth. Let us see: what woman has ever written a great poem—a *Faust*, for instance?"

The only woman's poem important in form that I had ever read was *Aurora Leigh*; but I was sure that if any one at table knew it, it would be only Monsieur Berthier, and that he would of course immediately launch either Milton or Shakspeare at my head, so I held my tongue.

"At all events there is one great woman writer at the present moment in France," said Monsieur Dessaix; "what do you say to Georges Sand? She may not be a writer of poems, but a great poet she undoubtedly is, although her works are in prose."

As he spoke, I saw—did I see?—yes—with my own eyes—I saw him stick his fork into a little piece of fried bread which was upon Miss Hamilton's plate, and transfer it to his own; there were several bits, and one by one he took them all. She only laughed, and abused him playfully. I looked anxiously towards Madame Olympe—she coloured deeply and appeared greatly shocked and displeased.

"Nevertheless I hold by my position," said Monsieur Berthier, with insisitive mildness. "What woman has written, or ever will write, a *Faust*—a *Hamlet*? What woman has ever painted a fine picture? What woman has ever composed a great opera? Even as executants they are surpassed by men."

"I deny it," said Ursula, vehemently. "If you have had your Talma and your Rubini, we have had our Siddons, and our Pasta, and our Malibran, and we still have our Pauline Viardot!"

"Even in pianoforte playing," continued Monsieur Berthier, smiling, "what woman ever played like Liszt, for instance?"

"Oh!" cried Miss Hamilton, "if it is to be a question of physical strength, of course I give in!"

"Not at all—not at all," persisted Monsieur Berthier; "but what woman ever approached on the piano, the delicacy and the sentiment of Chopin's playing?"

"Ah, who indeed!" said Monsieur Dessaix, who had known and loved him. "What was it like? When one seeks a similitude for it, one thinks involuntarily of things delicious and evanescent in nature—the shadow of the flight of a bird—the tremulous flicker of leaves over a bit of sunny ground—and so human too! it was the very embodiment of *rêverie*: nothing was ever in the least like it!"

"You see," said Monsieur Berthier, laughing gently, "that even in things which only require tenderness and delicacy, in which one would naturally imagine that the superiority would lie with your sex——"

"And so it does!" cried Ursula. "You are below your subject,—or you would be aware that the two functions which most nearly affect the happiness of the human race, are confided solely to the sensitive epiderme and the unequalled delicacy of touch of women—the rolling of your tobacco and your tea-leaves!"

The dinner wound up with an ugly ceremony enough: they all rinsed their mouths, and gargled their throats, and spat into their finger-glasses, with as much energy as if they had been cleaning their teeth in their own bedrooms. Lady Blankeney and her daughter alone, like women of principle, only just wet the tips of their fingers, after the English fashion. Miss Hamilton was much more like a foreigner than an Englishwoman in all her ways; as for me, I have no strength of mind, and so, though I thought it rather nasty, I did as Rome did; after which we returned to the drawing-room, in the same order in which we had left it.

"Well, my dear Countess," said Lady Blankeney, blandly smiling, "and what do you think of our two geniuses?"

"Geniuses!" said Madame Olympe, looking like thunder. "I don't know what their morals may be, but I never saw such bad manners in all my days!"

I glanced round in great anxiety, for Madame Olympe's indignation had hardly confined itself to a whisper: most fortunately both Ursula and Monsieur Dessaix had left the room.

"O dear! no, really! I *am* so grieved!" said Lady Blankeney in a nervous flutter. "I know our dear Ursula *is* rather peculiar. I always think geniuses *are* a little peculiar; but, dear me, I *am* so sorry! But was there anything very—very—eh?"

"I never beheld such ill-bred familiarity in all my life!" said Madame Olympe.

"He calls her thou—— four, five, six," said Miss Maria, who had taken some tapestry-work out of a bag and was counting her stitches.

"He ate out of her plate!" cried Madame Olympe. "It is disgusting!"

"Thirteen, fourteen, fifteen—she took his bread," said Miss Maria, with a spiteful smile.

"Pray has this sort of thing been going on all the time?" asked Madame Olympe, turning severely upon Lady Blankeney.

"O dear, no!" stammered Lady Blankeney, scared to death. "No—I rather think not—I should not exactly say so."

"He kissed her when he came—twenty-four," said Maria.

"Kissed her!" shouted Madame Olympe.

"Oh, good gracious me, Maria!" exclaimed poor Lady Blankeney.

"Why, never! I *really* think there *must* be some little mistake here!"

"Twenty-eight—I saw him do it," said Maria, with a quiet giggle.

While I was lying on the sofa, listening with regret to the storm of opinion that was setting in against Miss Hamilton—for whom, in spite of her strange ways, I could not help feeling the strongest attraction—I heard her and Monsieur Dessaix tranquilly pacing up and down together before the house. Suddenly Jeanne, who was at the window, shut it down very quickly and softly, and coming up to me said, in a low voice:—"My heavens, she is smoking! We must prevent Maman from looking out."

"Dearest Madame Olympe," I said—arresting her progress just as by some odd instinct she was crossing the room and making straight for the window—"would it be too much to ask you for the little cushion which is lying in the chair close by you?" She brought it, and arranged it tenderly under my head. I then took her hand, holding it fast while I spoke to her, until in a fit of absence she quite forgot her original purpose, and subsided gradually into a seat beside me, where I kept her talking about mother, until at last the danger was over and I saw Ursula and her friend reappear.

The beginning of the evening did not go off comfortably. None of the component parts of our little society seemed to amalgamate; they all fell asunder in a helpless, hopeless sort of way. Monsieur Charles went fast asleep in one of the large arm-chairs. Miss Maria worked on, never opening her lips except to count her stitches. Monsieur Kiowski and Monsieur Berthier were at the other end of the room, looking over some valuable prints. Monsieur Jacques made an attempt to speak to Lady Blankeney, but she withdrew from him with an extremely offended air, and went and sat by the chimney, where she dribbled away in never-ending inanity about Lady This, and Sir Somebody Something, to Madame Olympe, who was standing before the fire with her gown well tucked up in front, rocking herself backwards and forwards in displeased abstraction. Both Ursula and Monsieur Jacques seemed rather isolated and neglected. I do not know whether she perceived it, but he certainly did. Presently she came and placed herself at the table which stood before my sofa.

"Are you obliged always to lie down?" said she. "Can you occupy

yourself in that position? Do you ever play at games? Will you play a game of chess with me?"

The chess-board was on the table before us, so we opened it, and began a game. After we had been playing some time, Monsieur Dessaix, having no one to speak to, came and sat down by us.

"Ursula," said he, in a low voice, "dost thou think I have made an agreeable impression upon thy friends?"

"I daresay you have. Why shouldn't you?" she answered. "It is your move, Miss Hope."

"Thou art mistaken, my darling. They detest me—thy new friends I mean: thy great countess who warms herself so majestically at the fire there; Lady Blankeney, too, has begun to hate me."

"Check!" said I.

"Thou art brimful of fancies," said Miss Hamilton. "Why on earth should she hate thee?"

"Didst thou not see how she moved to the other side of the room just now?" he replied. "That was to avoid me."

I, who had seen her do it, and heard the conversation which had preceded this performance of hers, knew very well that it was no fancy of his, but that she had simply gone over to the enemy and made up her mind to repudiate him from the moment that she discovered that he was not a success.

"Dost thou mean to sing to-night?" he continued, in his usual little level tone of discontent. "Do not do it; it always has a much better air to refuse the first evening."

"Check!" said I again. "No, you can't move there—that is in check to the knight."

"Dost thou believe that they will ask me to play? It would be indecent of them to do it after my journey—wouldn't it? I shall refuse; they are so insolent, these aristocrats! Thou dost not know them as I know them," said Monsieur Jacques.

"There, Jacques! you have made me lose my castle!" cried Miss Hamilton.

"I will be silent, since I bore thee," he said, and he took up a book and pretended to read. Presently, however, he looked at her over the top of it very mournfully, and began again:—

"My Ursula! Is it possible that I bore thee!"

"Check," said I. "No, you cannot go there on account of the white bishop."

"That I bore thee!" he ejaculated, with his melancholy little dark eyes fixed upon her.

"Oh, Jacques, *do* hold your tongue!"

"I'm afraid it's checkmate," said I.

"And that's your fault!" she cried, laughing, and gave him a box on the ear.

I looked round in an agony. Luckily no one was turned our way, and



nobody saw it, except little Joanne, who was sitting by my side ; she screwed up her mouth very tight, and opened her eyes very wide, but I knew she was safe, and would tell no tales.

"Mademoiselle Ursula, are you too tired to sing at all this evening ?" said Monsieur Berthier. "It is some years since I have had the pleasure of hearing you, but I have not forgotten those beautiful chest notes ; you have, no doubt, made great progress since that time. You were only just beginning to learn then, you know."

"Do not sing, I entreat of thee," murmured Monsieur Jacques in her ear ; "it is better *genre* not to sing the night that one arrives."

"Oh, do not prevent her from doing what would make us all so happy," said I ; "that is," turning to her, "if you really are not too tired."

"No, indeed," she replied. "I should like to sing to you, if Madame de Caradec does not object to our using the piano."

Madame Olympe rose from her seat sullenly, without a word, and went and opened the instrument ; after which she proceeded to light two small lamps. Monsieur Kiowski was anxious to be of use to her, and fidgeted round her with a lucifer-match, which he had rushed to get from the hall ; but she ignored him completely ; steadily, in the face of his match, lit her lamps at a private bit of paper of her own, which was an hour taking fire, and nearly walked over him as she stalked up to the piano and placed them upon the desk.

Ursula then sat down and sang the famous air of "*Lascia ch'io pianga*" with such breadth and pathos, and such a glorious contralto voice, that we were all thrown into a state of the greatest commotion—all except Miss Blankeney. I looked at her, and I could see her lips forming Four, five, six to herself. "Brava ! brava ! e mille volte brava ! mi consolo tanto !" shouted Monsieur Kiowski, who had drawn an arm-chair exactly opposite to her when she began, into which he had thrown himself rather protectingly and with the air of a connoisseur, and who now jumped up from it with all the real enthusiasm of an artist. As for me, my nerves were in a very shaky condition, and I had never heard anything half so beautiful, and I began to cry. She was going to get up, when Madame Olympe, who was standing behind her, put her hands upon her shoulders, and saying with emotion, "Oh ! how *grand* it is ! Some more, some more !" pressed her down into her seat. She sang for us until she was quite tired—whatever she knew by heart, for her music had not yet been unpacked, and as soon as she had done one thing there was a cry for another. At last Madame Olympe took her hands, and saying in a penetrated voice, "Oh ! how you sing ! how happy you are to be able to give such *deep* happiness to others !" embraced her. "And your friend Monsieur Dessaix," she continued, turning to him courteously—for the music had melted away all her wrath—"he plays the violin I believe ? Will he not play us something ?"

"Madame la Comtesse," he said, getting upon his feet, and assuming

an air of sickly solemnity, which was nearly the death of Jeanne, "I trust that you will deign to dispense with my compliance this evening. My health is delicate—I suffer incredibly from my nerves—genius must wear its crown of thorns." Here he smiled with idiotic fatuity, and danced about upon his legs. "To-morrow—yes, to-morrow, I shall be most happy!" and then he clicked his heels together and bowed, quite convinced that he had done the thing in the most perfect manner imaginable. Madame Olympe returned to Miss Hamilton, and putting her arm kindly round her said,—

"But some one else must do something. She must have some rest, or we shall kill her!"

"Oh, I will play," said I; and I went and played some of Heller and Schumann's smaller pieces. We then made Monsieur Kiowski sing. This was not easy of achievement. First of all he said that he really never sang at all; then, that he was shockingly out of practice; then, that he knew nothing by heart; then, that he had a bad cold, and had completely lost his voice; after which he was made to confess that he had brought his music with him, and was despatched upstairs to fetch it. I undertook to try and accompany him, and he sang several of Gordigiani's songs quite charmingly, with a sweet little impertinent tenor voice, great sentiment, and the most perfect Italian accent. These Florentine airs led to a comparison between the Tuscan and Neapolitan melodies, and then Ursula sat down again to the piano, and gave a number of examples of the latter with infinite fun and spirit. Our evening had become brilliant under the influence of her brilliant gift; and all the clouds were swept clean away from Madame Olympe's noble face, which was radiant with pleasure.

At last Miss Hamilton got up, and we went together to the table where Monsieur Jacques was sitting building card-houses in solitary grandeur.

"Thou hast sung like an angel," he said, "but thou singest too much. One day thou wilt die with thy mouth open. Why did nobody ask me to play? I suppose they did not wish to hear me; but it would have been more civil at any rate, I think, to ask me."

"But, my dear Jacques, you *were* asked," answered Miss Hamilton, "and you refused. I heard you with my own ears refuse. Why, before there was any question at all of music, you declared your positive intention of not playing."

"Certainly I did," he said; "nothing should have induced me to play; but still if they had wished very much to hear me, they could have asked me a second time. It might have been very bad, but it might have been very good,—how could they tell? Thou thinkest that I am vain, and feeble, and peevish? Ah, how well thou knowest me! Thou, who art so strong, must often despise me at the bottom of thy heart! Confess that thou dost! Thou needest say nothing; I see it in thy nose. What a nose thou hast, my Ursula! It is always going, going, going; it is like a rabbit's. Why didst thou sing nothing of mine this evening? Dost thou not like my music? Dost thou not believe in my talent any more?"

"The accompaniments of thy songs are too difficult," said Ursula, "and I do not know them by heart."

"I know them by heart," said Monsieur Jacques, "and I could have played them if I had been asked."

Luckily, Lady Blankeney and Madame Olympe rose at this moment, and an end was put to his complaints.

Nothing could be more amiable and pretty than Miss Hamilton's manner when she found that we were to share the same room. "And I will call you Bessie and you must call me Ursula for ever afterwards," she said, as she kissed me and wished me good-night.

We had been in bed about an hour when I was awakened by the noise of a knocking at the wall against which Miss Hamilton's bed was placed; and, presently, Monsieur Dessaix's voice came through the thin partition quite distinctly.

"Ursula, art thou asleep?" it said, in a low tone.

"Yes, I am," she answered, sitting bolt upright in her bed. "What dost thou want?"

"Oh, Ursula!" moaned the voice from the next room, "thou sleepest, but I cannot close my eyes!"

"Why, what's the matter? what's amiss?"

"Dearest Ursula," it went wailing on, "there is a dreadful smell in my room. Oh, it is such a smell! That is why I cannot sleep. Good-night, my angel!"

"Good-night, my good Jacques," she answered gently.

I heard her lie down, and we were both nearly asleep again—at least I certainly was,—when the tapping recommenced at the head of Ursula's bed, and woke me once more.

"Oh, my Ursula! Dost thou sleep?"

She started up in bed. "Oh, what is it, Jacques? Do for heaven's sake try to rest!"

"My darling," said the mournful creature from the other side, "I can't think what it can be. . . . Oh, Ursula, it is such a smell! I do so wish thou couldst smell it! . . . . Good-night, my angel!"

"Good-night—good-night," she answered. "Be quiet and try to forget it."

We once more closed our eyes, but we might have spared ourselves the trouble, for in about ten minutes a series of hurried and exultant thumps were executed upon the partition.

"Dearest!" his little cracked voice uttered in jubilant accents, "I have found them! . . . . They are apples! . . . . They are in a little cupboard under my bed! . . . . Good-night, my Ursula! good-night!"

The stable clock struck one as he spoke, and after that he allowed us to repose in peace.

## Orpheus.

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*Orpheus.* Vanished for evermore  
 From sunshine and green earth, from life and me;  
 I have not won her back to roam along the lea,  
 To weave new garlands by the river shore:  
 She is twice lost and I am desolate.  
 Before I tuned a lamentable song  
 To melt the spirit of Persephone,  
 And sorrow soothed me ere false hope grew strong;  
 Now all my foolish tears are desecrate.  
 One said to soothe his misery,  
 "Surely a man is wise,  
 If God vouchsafe to blind his eyes,  
 To feed upon the fattening husk of lies,  
 Drenching the clear-eyed spirit in vanity."  
 She wooed me fair and graciously to stay,  
 The queen with smooth and dusky hair,  
 And visage cut so shadowy clear,  
 You could not tell if she were dark or fair,  
 And ashen ghostly eyes:  
 She said that I should come again a rougher way:  
 What did she mean? I am too tired to care;  
 Why was I then more wise?

Vanished for evermore  
 From sunshine and green earth, but not from me:  
 Beyond the unfruitful shore,  
 Where the nine rivers blend  
 Stormy complaints and moans and wranglings without end,  
 In one hoarse hopeless roar.  
 Surely she waits for me, while I must flee,  
 Rushing no whither, wandering to and fro,  
 From the sharp lash of woe,  
 While madness hunts me and death beckons me.

The mænads roam more happily than I,  
 For drunken with one kiss,  
 Resting not by night or day,  
 Heeding not the weary way,  
 They hurry on the track till they espy  
 The face of him who only is their bliss——  
 ——They wander hope-besotted till they die

Before they feel despair :  
 Or drop down overwearied, one by one,  
 On lonely mountain heights,  
 To live through all they have enjoyed or done  
 In dreams of many nights,  
 Till friendly hands shall bear  
 Tame bodies to the prison of still homes,  
 Whence no one after roams  
 To find the kiss of any god at all  
 Though the red vintage call,  
 Though luscious Autumn or green golden Spring  
 Flush other veins with blood of revelry ;  
 They sit at home and sing  
 A silly lullaby :  
 And call their bondage purity,  
 Each arching her sleek neck beneath the yoke  
 For her dull lord to stroke,  
 Fate's fool more patient and more wise than I.

*Manades.* Come and be at one with us,  
 Kiss and sing and run with us ;  
 By hill and dale, by meadow and brake,  
 Come, for we have a thirst to slake,  
 For we are athirst for blood,  
 Of man or beast, it is one to us,  
 For our thirst is very ravenous,  
 Who have drunken deep of the blood of the god,  
 Who hath swept through our veins with a fiery flood,  
 And hath blinded our eyes with his ivy rod.

*Orpheus.* I kiss no maids that walk on earthly sod.

It were not hard to find that rougher way :  
 It wearies her to wait while I delay ;  
 Although she rests and feels the ruler's hand  
 Smooth her blown hair, while she  
 Is nestling at her ease,  
 On the broad footstool of Persephone,  
 Whose mighty purple knees  
 Are very motherly outspread  
 To prop her little golden head,  
 Who has no need to stand.  
 And all the flowers of earth that grow by night,  
 And wear a ghostly livery of white,  
 White and pale green with fading purple stains,  
 Flourish for ever there and through the gloom look bright.  
 Only I think smooth chains

Link if they do not load her clinging hands,  
And soft unsandalled feet ;  
While close behind her stands,  
Casting unloving looks upon my sweet,  
Lest she a second time should go away,  
One of the inexorable three,  
Who suffer not the sun to stray,  
And they look upward hungrily for me,  
Through the black vault of hell.  
What would they have I cannot tell,  
But only this I know,  
If I were bound with her below,  
She might be loosed, she would not wish to go.

*Menades.* Musing and mourning still ?  
Come, make ready the ivy spear,  
Drive along the lumpish steer,  
Quicken his pace with a touch of fear,  
Ah ! that was blood which started on the goad.  
Come, for we must not loiter on the road,  
Come, dance with blither cheer,  
Lest we turn to look for a victim here,  
Because sunset and sacrifice are near.

*Orpheus.* Maidens, I do not fear the ivy rod.

Yes, they will lead me by a ready way,  
And I shall reach the goal before my guides ;  
For now Time's troublous tides  
Shall cast me high upon a quiet shore,  
Whence I shall hear the billows roar,  
Whose bloody spray shall never wet me more.  
Yes, we shall rest together quietly,  
Quietly, and not wearily ;  
One thing which does not change  
Amid all other change makes weariness ;  
There are no changes there.  
It will be very strange  
To have no hope, and not to feel despair ;  
To have so little joy and yet to feel no pain.  
One thought's sweet slumberous stress  
Shall bind us closer than a chain,  
While everlastingly we think  
By gentle Lethe's reedy brink,  
For Lethe still flows nearest to the throne,  
We have been parted twice, we shall not part again.

But all her smiles shall not be mentioned then,  
Nor all the worship which I had of men,  
But we shall sit beside the ruler's knee,  
And kiss among the crowd to feel we are alone,  
Although the still queen see  
Myriads of myriads in her vassalage,  
We shall not care,  
We two shall be alone with her,  
Two tame doves with clipped wings in one grey cage.  
Thy last thought was of me, mine is of thee ;  
And the last thought of earth is everlasting there.

*Menades.* We have bidden thee once, we have bidden thee twice,  
We have bidden thee twice, and thou wouldst not hear,  
Hearken now as we bid thee thrice,  
Lest if Bacchus be nothing in thine eyes,  
Thy quivering flesh mend the Bacchanals' cheer,  
So join in our revel and be thou wise.

*Orpheus.* Both now and heretofore I praise your God.

*Menades.* Oh, what a glorious sacrifice !

*A Menas.* What sweet and delicate blood !

*Orpheus.* Eurydice !

G. A. SIMCOX.

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## Our Old Pictures.

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THE process of "cleaning" the National Gallery pictures, so much and justly animadverted upon some years ago, has been carried on more or less ever since. I cannot help remarking upon the practice, in the hope it may lead to a discontinuance of the very positive injuries caused by it to works of such intrinsic merit.

In order to do this, and induce all those who have the love of excellence at heart to express themselves emphatically, I will refer them to the present condition of those pictures cleaned years back, and to those recently done, during the last recess, and now exposed to view. I take upon myself this very unwelcome duty for one reason only—to aid in the better conservation of works that cannot possibly be replaced. And publicly, because it is a national matter, and thus may more readily gain the immediate attention of the trustees of the National Gallery, who, I take for granted, have the power of stopping it. It will be well to show, as can be shown, the causes from which such sad results ensue.

The idea of restoring pictures some centuries old to their original keynote, or scale of brightness, arises in a misconception of what brightness really is. It is confounded with the *whiteness* characteristic of modern oil-paintings, which, in structural or intrinsic qualities, have nothing whatever in common with those of the old masters. If the cleaners really appreciated this distinction, they would not make the attempt to raise the scale of these old works to the whiteness of the modern. A ruby, although of so dark a tint, is bright in the sense that a diamond is, though not in the same degree. The delicate complexion of a little infant is many degrees removed from the whiteness of its linen. Failing to observe these facts in Nature, they do not see how truly the workmen of past time represented them. The relative value of every local colour is as truly given in their pictures as in nature. This oversight furnishes a sort of excuse, or, at least, explanation, for their proceedings, mistaking *lowness of tone* for dirt, and *whiteness* for brightness. It does not explain the logic which argues that "time will mellow and perfect modern paintings," or explain the motive for taking from the old paintings what they allege time to have accomplished. This misconception is their only excuse. Many honest men do conscientiously follow false conclusions. I will endeavour to help towards getting rid of such conclusions, and, I trust, in such a way as will be acceptable and intelligible to students and lovers of art. Of course I

must incur censure from those painters who are content to work by routine and not by rule ;—who

Indiscreetly stray  
Where *purlind practice* only leads the way ;  
Who every theoretic truth disdain,  
And blunder on, mechanically vain ;—

who do such work as they do without reference to Nature, only to the conventional usage by which such workmen supersede Nature, and at last desert her altogether. The practice of true art, even in process, is like Nature, *i.e.* the beginning must be the commencement of the end—the end being completeness or unity obtained by and through variety of parts ; both of which conditions constitute our never-ending delight in the study of nature. Art also, in a limited degree, does the same thing. For this reason we do not tire of excellent art, because, like Nature, we cannot exhaust it, and in proportion as we understand it are made the better by its study. It is indeed a form of religion—a reminder of the Great Artist ; an aid to the reverence of Him, an educator of mankind of the most potent sort, because it is only attainable through a love of truth—a most scrupulous seeking for it in realities.

As to the effect of cleaning on the pictures done in 1852, I am confident that each one is worse for the operation. It is true, as was replied to the objectors to this process at the time, “ that the rawness of the colours would soon be toned down.” The pictures are many tones lower, but, instead of having the glow and warmth they once exhibited, even through the alleged dirt (dirt there undoubtedly was), they now look dull, and would be leaden but for the latent quality of luminousness. Dis-jointed and patchy they certainly are, and I, with others, think, from being deprived of those transparent colours their authors employed to reveal the luminous quality, latent in these, but not in modern pictures, and which, when there, made each work into a perfect unity. I know that many painters of this day believe that transparent or glazing colours were not used. They naturally believe this from the fact that they cannot use them, or if they do, do so very partially, and *never* to the advantage of their work ; because the commencement of their work is not of the kind that could gain anything by such a proceeding. But a proper use of opaque colours as a foundation involves the employment of transparent ones over them. The improper use forfeits the characteristic qualities of each.

The peculiar properties of opacity and transparency which pigments ground in oil offer to the painter does really constitute the distinction which is perceived, but by few appreciated, between these and water-colours. The belief that the distinction lies in the vehicles only is ungrounded. That it is generally believed, I conclude by the talk common among artists, and from instances of water-colour painters taking to oils : for example, the late Copley Fielding and Mr. Thorburn. The latter's miniatures upon ivory have a fulness and a force of colour seldom attained in water-colours ; while

the landscapes of the former are of the tenderest delicacy. Both fail in the same degree of excellence in oil through not perceiving that success depends on something else than the mere fact that the colours are mixed in the one case in oil and the other in water. Yet practice founded on this conclusion is the prevailing one, and will so continue until patrons and artists learn that patches of coloured pigment laid in juxtaposition upon a canvas do *not* constitute a practice; but that the art of using colour lies first in the imitation of the luminous quality of Nature's light and shade, and next, in the unbroken gradation of her colour from the one to the other, so as to make the beholder forget that pigments are employed at all. In these particulars there is no deficiency in the works of the old masters. At present, both these qualities are wanting, and the "mellowing effect of time" is expected to do what the artist could not! Sir Joshua Reynolds said, "There is not a man on earth who has the least notion of colouring: we all of us have it equally to seek for, and find out—as at present it is totally lost to the art."\* He tried his whole life through, and tried (as his own notes show) some very unlikely modes of attaining to the knowledge he so coveted. His aspirations were of the highest, his taste was excellent, his sense of the arrangement of light and shade very uncommon. Hence his pictures engrave well, but his colour is too like a tinted surface, and, as we see, the local colours of the parts nearly faded altogether. In his case they never could have been part and parcel of the form, as it is in the work of the Venetians and that of all good colourists, who drew the shapes of things with colours, and with such perfect mastery of the means as we now see in pictures by them that have escaped injury from external causes. Yet the method they employed to paint a face we are no more reminded of than the processes in a living one; and so their pictures bear confronting with Nature now. Good art, like Nature still, does not obtrude the means employed to produce the end. The details of her works are never obtruded upon the beholder; the entirety or unity of the object is what attracts attention. Its unity remains in the memory apart from and independent of its details. Details have to be examined alone, one by one, and afford a separate source of pleasure. We look at them with the wonder of children, to learn how the real marvel—the unity—is arrived at; we do not need, neither have the majority of people the skill to dissect. It is only the student who has to do this,—and he only does it to advantage by remembering that details refer to a whole. This is the "art of seeing Nature." The details of Nature's works are beyond the reach of man's imitation, as infinity is beyond his conception. Detail in works of art must never interfere with the general effect of the work, be it in sculpture, painting, poetry, music, architecture, or any form of art. The total presentment of the subject chosen is the main point; the degree of detail must be such that no doubt may arise in the mind of the spectator as to what the actual form of the object represented really is. The details of

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\* ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S *Lives of the British Painters* (art. Northcote).

the most highly wrought painting our National Gallery contains well exemplify the utmost degree of it at which the student need aim; but in mere detail, photography beats this hollow. In no other respect, however, is photography so true. I dwell on these points in order to lead attention to the fact, that Art and Nature are entirely distinct. Art is founded on Nature—vies with her, indeed,—and, although of more limited capacity, is mistress of her domain. Ages back the limit of her means of expression was attained, as Greek art witnesses; the boundaries then ascertained cannot be passed or neglected, but to cause confusion. This confusion prevails now, because the true knowledge of the law of expression by means of colour is lost, and each painter, not having this knowledge, but trusting only to “feeling,” is led by it, ever wide of the mark.

Have the cleaners ever noticed that Sir Joshua Reynolds commends the brief account Pliny gives of the mode of operation used by Apelles—“that over his so far finished picture he spread a transparent liquid like ink, of which the effect was to give brilliancy, and at the same time to lower the too great glare of the colour?—(*quod absoluta opera atramento illinebat ita tenui, ut id ipsum repercussu claritates colorum excitaret; et cum ratione magna, ne colorum claritas oculorum aciem offenderet.*)” This passage, though it may possibly perplex the critics, is a true and artist-like description of the effect of glazing, such as was practised by Titian and the rest of the Venetian masters. This custom or mode of operation implies at least a true taste of that in which the excellence of colouring consists: which does not proceed from fine colours, but true colours; from breaking down those fine colours which would appear too raw to a deep-toned brightness. Perhaps the manner in which Correggio practised the art of glazing was still more like that of Apelles, which was only perceptible to those who looked close to the picture (*ad manum intuenti demum appareret*); whereas in Titian, and still more in Bassan, and others his imitators, it was apparent on the slightest inspection. Artists who may not approve of glazing must still acknowledge that this practice is not that of ignorance. Unfortunately for the world it is that Reynolds did not himself know perfectly how to conduct the first stages of his work, so that it could be completed by this last, the value of which he so thoroughly appreciated. The reason his colours have fled is a simple one. The transparent colours were laid upon his preparation of opaque colour before it was fully dry, and were absorbed by it in a very short time. His contemporary, Peter Pindar, through witnessing their early failure, was enabled to say, “If he did not succeed entirely, at least he came off with flying colours.” Another fundamental error—a main one—was the assumption that all the force and value of the local colour of an object could be attained by washes of transparent tints over a preparation done in solid black and white without colour. This is the plan pursued in colouring an engraving. The proof that he felt this plan to be incomplete is seen in his own notes. These show that he, like other inquirers, now and then believed that he had found what he sought.

"Jan. 22, 1770. Sono stabilito in maniere di dipingere." Other entries show how little it was established, and explain away, I think, the accusation that he withheld information from his pupils. The works of his pupil Northcote do not exhibit any excellence of colour, because of the indefinite teaching of the master, whose merits are from the genius Nature gave him; his best works are done by "a kind of felicity," and this is incommunicable. The rule he lays down, and by which his own practice was governed, for ascertaining the proportion or composition of light and shade in the old pictures, got from his study of the best masters, is one of the few useful to students. The scholars of Titian are great colourists, not such great designers as their master; so are Rubens's, so Vandyke's, because the law or science of colour was taught by them. The intuition, or genius, was and always will be the gift of Nature: she gives intuition to the poet, but does not give him the rules of grammar; yet, without this science of language, how could he utter his inspirations, or we readers entertain them? Can colours then be employed without order or rule? The imperfection of modern painting points to a negative; the perfection of ancient paintings also does the same. Reynolds only felt the uncertainty of his own knowledge as to the real method "that was totally lost to the art." He had a suspicion that his contemporary Gainsborough knew it; for although he took exception to the "slight feathery execution of this admirable painter," he yet remarked "how truly he gets the place of his tint" (in other words, the gradation of it).

No doubt there was a floating tradition amongst the painters of the day—"for knowledge grows from man to man"—to which he got the clue from Hayman, his master, to whom it came, though greatly impaired, through Kneller direct from Vandyke, and that he had the discrimination to detect the principle and apply it in the way we see with that dainty lightness of hand which some object to, but for no sufficient reason, because the essence of the thing is in his works; that is, luminousness, true gradation, the planes of his objects occupying their true places, and the whole done with the most felicitous ease and grace, "as though breathed upon the canvas." For what is finish but completeness and unity? Elaboration is not necessarily finish. It is constantly talked of as such. The present pre-Raphaelites all exhibit most painfully the former, but the latter, never. To them, elaboration and finish seem the same. There is no written account, that I am aware of, of "this method that is lost" (but very many contradictory details—Mrs. Merrifield's books contain much valuable information, some *vivâ voce* statements of professors, that amuse from the confusion in which they leave the subject-matter); but I believe the method was of tardy growth, and so perfected at last that its principle of practice served for all schools whatsoever that are distinguished for excellence of colouring. All the accounts that I have seen remark upon the extraordinary care the old painters bestowed upon the preparation of their grounds; but the true reason for this painstaking is only partially hinted at. The late Sir Charles Eastlake describes at some

length, in his materials for a *History of Oil-Painting*, the different grounds made in old times, but does not indicate their true and important office, which is that of a reflector of light to the colours overlying the surface. The most brilliant pictures of all schools are found to have a base of pure white. But as a gradation of white cannot be got upon white, their grounds are also found to be covered with a wash of transparent colour. A light yellow always is the key of the brightest, frequently a red, or orange. This wash reduced the white ground to a half tint, which not only enabled the artist to get his half tones by the simple process of drawing over it with transparent and opaque colours, from the greatest dark in the one case, and from the greatest light in the other, to the lesser in both; but also served the important office of a key-note to the finished work, governing all the colours overlying it, which, being pitched or chosen at the beginning, might not be departed from. Those pictures by the old painters upon copper, and grounds made of solid red pigments, are invariably heavier or darker than the aforesaid. This mode of using colours simplified the practice of painting so that it became drawing in fact, simple in each of its stages, simple as the act of drawing with black and white chalk upon a half-tint paper. The greater complexity of painting over drawing arises from the fact that the three primitive colours—red, yellow, and blue—have to be present in every part of the work, so introduced that they shall not mix together, but modify one the other to the tint required, and obtained by showing one through the other, *entirely* lost by mixing them together. Hogarth,—who acquired the practice, but not the theory of painting from Hayman, coloured well unconsciously, as some of his works especially show—in his *Analysis of Beauty* says: “The difficulty lies in bringing blue, the third original colour, into flesh, on account of the vast variety introduced thereby, and this omitted, all the difficulty ceases,” &c.

His suggestion about colouring a bust shows thought upon the matter, as well as that he had not mastered the true theory of the application of colours. Marble can be tinted, as we all saw in the instance of Gibson's *Venus*; but the colour of nature was not imitated, neither can it be by only tinting a surface. The external surface of natural objects is the finishing one; colours from several surfaces below are exhibited through and modified by this. It is especially so in flesh. If the goddess herself had appeared to men of the leprous tint Gibson gave to her statue, she would have affrighted instead of alluring them by the living beauty of her colour; and this is what I mean by Hogarth's unconsciousness: for some of his pictures are excellent in colour. “The gray,” or retreating tint, which is to all moderns a sort of painter's puzzle, was by the old painters got first by washing, also in transparent form, the *opposite* colour of the ground over the whole. Then, with a colour mixed with white lead to the desired tint of the part, the light parts were *modelled* by drawing the form of the part into this wash of cold colour, simply from the thickly impasted focal light, gradating thinner and thinner from where it impinges,

till it retires, or fades away, as a ray of natural light does in exhibiting the forms of realities to us, into a negativeness of colour or shade. If the half lights get charged with more than the proper quantity of opaque colour, the rounding of the form is defective. By this method it is possible to imitate the subtle gradations of Nature; by the one commonly employed, impossible; because the degrees of gradation cannot be mixed in separate tints, for they cannot be detected, and so cannot be mixed, and then laid on in their places. The strongly-marked opposition of warm and cold colours that is to be seen in the "cleaned pictures" was obtained in this way. These cold or "gray" tints sometimes appear positive blue, from the absence of the final glazing which made them of the true degree of neutrality. This last process in the use of colours is then as important as the first and second; it serves the same purpose for pictures that Nature's external surfaces do for her works,—is intended from the beginning of the work (by those who understand how to do it) to be the end and completion—is the skin, through which the stronger colours below are seen, and by it modified to that gentle harmonious opposition resulting in unity, through and by the variety of constituents. Painting in oil-colours is really modelling in exquisitely low relief upon the ground, never losing it, and the value its quality communicates to the colours laid upon it affecting equally the thickly impasted opaque light, the semi-opaque half-light, and the transparent shadow. It is reported that Rubens said,—“If white lead were costly, like silver, then my pupils would colour better.” The prodigal use, or misuse of it, leads invariably to flatness and many bad qualities. I have said enough, I hope, to indicate that the delicate form of *modelling* in well-coloured pictures, since it is so delicate, is the more easily damaged by the use of spirits of wine and the stronger solvents at times resorted to in the process of “cleaning.”

I will now briefly mention a few of those operated upon in 1852. Let any one stand in the doorway of the room from which can be seen two Claudes. The one *has* both dirt and dirty varnish still over its surface; from the other it was “cleaned” off thirteen years ago. I believe that a healthy eye will unhesitatingly prefer the first-named, not indeed for the dirty varnish, which *is* a defect, but that it is in harmony with itself, and so distinct that all its parts (visible enough) subserve its general effect. Not so the last. This is separated into parts, and the separate colours employed made visible; the sun itself is no longer the source of colour, and is now cheerless, cold, and chalky, looking as though it were done in fresco. The St. Bavon, by Rubens, has still the same patchy appearance that was objected to at the time it was spoilt. The action of the piece is now confused by reason of the patchwork aspect of its surface, its motley assemblage of colours which once were in harmonious and brilliant relation. Another fine Rubens, the brightest I ever saw at the time the nation bought it, is now dull, far darker, and as near to monotony in colour as can well be. A small Rembrandt, “The Adoration of the Shepherds,” has grown so dark that it can now scarcely be seen, because of the employ-



ment of the "gallery varnish" on it, from the foolish notion that it needed lubricating, like a piece of machinery. I do not stay to notice the rest cleaned at that time—they are many—but a few others done since. A "Holy Family" by Titian, parts of which are in very good condition, except the figure of the Virgin, her blue dress, the blue of the sky, the yellow dress of the St. Catherine, are entirely stript of their glazings, which remain on some places in the picture, and may be taken for dirt, but a form of dirt that makes these places of far greater richness than the rest. The face of the St. Catherine looks as though the blood circulated in her veins still, but that of the Virgin is bloodless and inanimate, so far as colour goes. A woman's portrait hanging near, with her arm akimbo, —a fine specimen of Venetian work once,—is most pitifully scoured. Her face and neck look as though she had got out of her frame, being then alive, as the Painter left her, and with hot water and soap given herself so hard a scrub as to leave blotches of red on her over-"cleaned" skin; while the richness and glory of her hair, dress, and background are all taken away. A portrait of a lawyer, by Moroni, has the glazing taken entirely from every part, showing the state this work was in before it was glazed at all. The cleaner ought to be perfectly satisfied, having done his work so completely in this instance. In worse plight is the picture by Correggio, "Christ Praying in the Garden." I scarcely know what term to employ that will express its state. It is as though the cleaner got frightened and stopped, though too late, in his destruction of its rich harmoniousness. All its dignity of expression is gone, and the hanger of it, as if conscious of the damage done, has put it into a corner. The Rubens landscape, also put through this terrible process, with others by Poussin and Salvator Rosa, is quite skinned, and shocks the eye almost in the same degree that the flayed body of a dead animal does. There is the sun, with the lightest parts of the picture, now only so much yellow pigment: the glorifying power its previously undisturbed rays cast over the whole, is now taken away by the cleaner along with the dirty varnish, the half tints in some places robbed entirely, and now offer false, coarse, sudden contrasts to the shadows; and this sun

No longer stays in his course and plays the alchemist,  
Turning, by splendour of his precious eye,  
The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold.

It is pitiful that such errors can be committed, and by men who profess, and after a fashion have, a regard for art. This glazing, then, is, I maintain, removed in parts entirely, along with the dirt and discoloured varnish; hence the patchy appearance of all the cleaned pictures, and, so far, their resemblance to modern paintings, which invariably want that unity or completeness these very pictures had prior to "cleaning." Let any visitor to the Royal Academy Exhibition recall the observations he overheard last made upon the paintings (excepting only those by partisan admirers of certain *artists*, who, through being partisans, cannot see *any merit* in the works of others). All such observations go to one point,

and truly, that of incompleteness. In a portrait, either "It is too red!" "Too white!" "Too dirty!" These defects are the positive and obvious ones; in addition to them, defects beyond the definition of the unskilled commentators are summed up always in one way:—"I don't know what it is, but I do not like it at all." It is incomplete—this is the simple fact—and incomplete, I maintain, because executed without any fixed principle to guide the several processes which the employment of oil-colours necessitates. Every pigment is in modern works, without exception, as distinctly shown as on the palette of the painter, and any objector to this fact is always answered "that time will mellow and also harmonize these raw pigments into the pleasant unity" that even the uneducated eye unconsciously demands. Now, I simply ask, are the painters who so excuse the deficiency of their own works likely to be proper judges of the old masters' performances? If they really believe that time will do for theirs that which they admit (by the form of excuse they offer) they *cannot* do themselves, does it not seem absurd, on their own argument, to take away all that time is supposed by them to have done to the old pictures? Ought they to be allowed to exercise their will in this wholesale way, to the manifest detriment of such noble works? The nation bought them for what they were at the time of purchase, and did not contemplate further charges for reducing them by this baneful process, called "cleaning," to what they now are, disorganized remains. I should desire above all things that *dirt* should be removed, and dirty varnish too; but as the transparent colours are mixed with varnish more or less, and are laid on the last thing previous to subsequent varnishings, the solvent which takes off the one also takes off the other, and ignorant practitioners cannot distinguish between the value of glazing colours (which, I grant, are deepened by time, but nevertheless serve the intention for which they were originally put,) and the dirt on the outside surface of them. Evidently, then, they do not know the art of using colours; equally shown by their own works, "which need the help of time to *mellow*," &c., and by their treatment of those which cannot for any sum of money be replaced. I feel so strongly that I am not exaggerating the evils of this proceeding, and also so confident that I can demonstrate, if I have not adequately described, the cause of it, that I very gladly offer to do so to the trustees, if they will attend at my studio for the purpose. Meantime, I hope, for the true interest of art, and the honour of their trust, they will not sanction further injury to national property, but will order that none but the simplest form of cleaning shall be used,—I would suggest such as can be accomplished by most carefully rubbing the surface with bread one day old at certain intervals. Those who have not seen the efficacy of this simple agent in removing dirt will be greatly surprised at its sufficiency.

SAMUEL LAURENCE.

## Spain and the Spaniards.

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It is curious to take note of the ebb and flow of interest in Spain, and all that concerns it, which has of late influenced English opinion, and to contrast in some detail the ups and downs of its past and present hold on the public mind. Fifty years ago Spain was cast up, as it were, on our shores, as a subject of the keenest personal interest to every family in the kingdom by the resistless wave of war. After its subsidence, and the slow dropping off of individual lives, the silence of the very lowest ebb-tide seemed to have closed over her; for the interest we took in Spanish politics during the George the Fourth period was altogether abstract, impersonal, and lifeless. In the days of the Carlist wars and Evans' legion, we certainly came under another, but a far feebler wave, of personal, leading to ultimate political, interest in Spain; but this soon passed away. Then came Ford and his Handbook, by which the nature and character of our interest was completely changed, and since which, we may say, that we have been half-drowned in the new wave of touristic travel. Perhaps it is not altogether unpleasant; but still we are floating chin-deep in a regular sea of things about Spain: Spanish tours, Spanish books, Spanish photographs, Spanish everything—except Spanish cash payments,—and perhaps Spanish wines, which the present generation, confidently presumptuous, and not knowing what is before it, seems to be abandoning for Greek. Half one's acquaintance are planning a tour in Spain, or have just returned from a few weeks in that newly-favoured country. The pity is that, after all, so few of these same tourists ever stay more than a few weeks, and a very few weeks too. One would think that some among the now daily increasing list might find leisure for something better than the mere hasty "vacation tour." A quartette of Members of Parliament were in Spain within six months of each other; Peers, Scotch Baronets, Alpine Clubmen, and even solitary Peeresses have added the graces of their names within the last three or four years. Some studious burrowers in old MSS. and some high-stepping "own correspondents" fill up the goodly list. From these we have derived some half-dozen works, of various degrees of value, and we may reasonably expect two or three more in process of time.

The most recent of these, Lady Herbert of Lea's heavy octavo, perhaps claims precedence, from its having rather better illustrations than usual; though for ourselves we should have preferred to have fewer in number and better in kind.\* Her ladyship's work is more an itinerary of devout

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\* How infinitely preferable would have been a few good photographs of the glorious buildings she gives in rather poor woodcuts, with ridiculous figures, apparently taken from opera choruses, stuck in the foreground.

pilgrimage than anything else, and will, after a few weeks' run, be only interesting to her co-religionists, and those who wish to feed a certain Christianized Arabian Nights' view of Spain, derived from a jumble of Washington Irving's stories and the biographies of Spanish saints. Mr. O'Shea's laboriously produced volume will be of unquestionable value to the tourist, although very unlikely to supersede that crabbed, cross-grained, dogmatic, and most valuable old Ford. Of course, as an example of excellent things packed in small parcels, Mr. Grant Duff's "Study," in his recently published volume, is the very best of all; but then he deals with the political history almost only. It is an essay of unsurpassed trustworthiness, and very interesting besides. In fact, it is not a little curious to observe the remarkable accuracy with which the Spanish character and the present condition of the country have been gathered together, without, we imagine, any very lengthened personal experience of Spain; but then it is not every "vacation tourist" that can do this. From our own point of view—a very different one from his, chiefly confined to one province, and from joining only in the society of one class, viz. the financial or middle-class—we confess to a certain surprise at Mr. Grant Duff's accuracy; and we even believe that we could impart to him a few facts which would make him feel that he had come nearer the truth than he knew at the time; or, at least, that some things on which he has touched but lightly might have been very seriously emphasized. For instance, Mr. Grant Duff remarks that "Spain retains less of the real spirit of Christianity than any other country." Taking morality to be of the essence of Christianity, he might have said that the immorality of the Spaniard, more especially one particular form of immorality, among the upper and lower classes of society, and of the priests, is far beyond that of any other European country. As one slight testimony of this, we may bring the sorrowful but solemn acknowledgment of the archbishop of one of the largest provinces in Spain, that he only knew of two priests in his whole diocese, besides himself, who led decently chaste lives! While it is also worthy of note, that no country in Europe, we believe, can show so enormous a proportion of foundlings and foundling hospitals.

For ourselves, we should say that the very chief and foremost characteristic of the Spaniard, only slightly touched upon by Mr. Grant Duff, is the utter want of mutual *good faith* in the country. From the Queen and Cabinet downwards to the very lowest individual, there is the same perfect indifference to any engagement, however solemnly made (matrimony included). Whether among Ministerial promises of direct assistance in encouraging the improvements of the country—roads, bridges, canals, schools, colleges, hospitals, &c.—or the more indirect connivance at the slave-trade; whether as regards the promulgation of a new constitution, or the payment of national debts—promises are alike as pie-crust. Even in such smaller circumstances as the taking a place in a conveyance, hiring a servant, a house, even a bed in an inn (and in these matters of course we mean among themselves, for a foreigner is fair game all the

world over)—in each and all the weakest goes to the wall. This, we venture to say, is the national characteristic. “*El crédito Español*” is one of the “*cosas de España*” promised on the eternal “*mañana*”—the tomorrow which never arrives.

Another characteristic, overlooked naturally by a rapid, rushing tourist, is their remarkable inhospitality. In saying this, we do not allude to the stand-off coldness, such as an Englishman shows to the foreigner in Great Britain, but the mutual inhospitality among themselves. They meet but seldom in each other's houses, in comparison with other nations; never take their abominable *puchero* and *garbanzos* together; no friends, but only the near relations, who live in or about one house, ever surround the Spanish board. Invitations are given for *tertulias* or evening parties only, and at these the heaviest refreshment is *agua fresca* and a few lumps of sugar; if ices are added, the *soirée* may be fairly termed sumptuous. After an hour or two, the company go home to munch their lettuce and tomato salad before bed. We hope our readers will understand that we are not contrasting Spanish inhospitality with our deadly ceremony of London dinner-parties, which we fondly deem to be the type of hospitality, but rather with the boundlessly open and easy hospitality of the East, after its own fashion, or of the transitional countries of Eastern Europe, where everybody is always dropping in upon everybody else at the sunset dinner-time, and is always welcome. Of course there are exceptions. An old-fashioned country gentleman or farmer will occasionally open the gate of his golden orange-groves, and say, “Your grace must lighten my heart by choosing all the sweetest and best oranges to be found; and what he cannot eat must be carried home, to remind him of the humble friend and entertainer whose whole property is at his service.” But such complaisance is rare, and is chiefly characteristic of Andalusia, where courtesy is the rule. This want of hospitality is important, because it tends to prevent a healthy exchange of ideas, and does much to diminish the good effect we may hope for from the railways. It is also, we submit, one indication of their want of good faith and confidence in each other.

With the Spanish peasant it is different. He is a sober, frugal, industrious, and intelligent man, working well when he does work, but not too careful for the wants of the morrow. For his furious temper, his passionate loves and hatreds, his degrading, brutal vices, the pages of Ford may be consulted as a not over-painted picture; but we must add our opinion that the same brutality of soul abounds in more than one of the classes above the peasant, partly concealed by a meanness and pettiness of spirit that is very unlike the popular English story-book portrait of the *Hidalgo*.\* When the wretched *camarilla* that now governs the country

\* We have used a strong word, but we mean it. If ever there was a brutal nation it is the Spanish. They are by nature capable of every kind of refinement; but in the meanwhile there is an undercurrent of brutality in them that is far less well covered over than the Tartar beneath the Russian skin. However the taint may have been originally shed into the blood, it is unquestionably kept up and fostered by the beloved

have passed away, and a Ministry can be formed of anything better than a succession of generals, we may hope that education may do something for the gentry of Spain. At present, while more than one Englishman bears testimony to the excellence of the peasant schools, the teaching afforded to the upper classes is simply deplorable: even the seminarists can scarcely understand their Latin breviary, and among the medical men there is, we believe, almost total ignorance of Latin—we might also add of medicine; while the tourist will very rarely meet with any official in the great libraries who has more than a faint idea of the books under his care. Our picture is dark, but it is true; and it is not to be made lighter by adducing single exceptions.

There is plenty of money in the country, but it is hoarded, as in the East, not spent, for want of encouragement and of faith in each other. Besides, it is necessary for a prudent man always to keep a large stock in hand in case of a law-suit, however trifling, or an arrest, however temporary, when the judge's hands must be well lined if any "justice" is to be done. The laws are good, but what is the use of them if none but the purse-receiver is to decide the case? To be sure, even then money is of little use should a military man be in the way; and rash indeed would be the man who went into court to prove that black was black or white was white, when a colonel or a captain said the contrary. We ourselves once consulted a Spanish friend about a very simple affair which we proposed to have decided by the *alcalde*. "Are you mad?" asked our friend. "Not at all; here is the simple proof." "Of course, I know that," he returned, with a shrug of impatient pity; "but don't you know that your antagonist is an officer?"

Every traveller that ever sets foot in the Spain of our day bears witness to the extreme rudeness of the public functionaries—the post-office men, the railway officials, the bankers' clerks, the small innkeepers, &c. The traveller in old days led a wilder and freer life, and came more into contact with the genuine people, when living on horseback or muleback, as in the East. There were few Jacks-in-office then, in comparison to these days of railroads and diligences. Now, however, a man may pass through

bull-fights, to which the aged or worn-out favourites of the gentry are consigned by their tender and affectionate masters, who make parties to go and see them tortured by the bull. We shall never forget the deep impression made upon ourselves at the only bull-fight we have witnessed, of how deeply an absolute love of cruelty is inbred in them. There were some three or four ladies in the box with us, and two boys, one of five, the other of six years old: they were gaily-dressed, bright little fellows, full of joy at attending the *funcion*. It happened after a time that one of the wretched horses was half-killed by the bull exactly beneath our box, and was left to lie there; whereupon these little petticoated boys nearly fell out of the box in the ecstatic clapping of their hands and screams of delight, as they minutely watched the still quivering bowels of the poor beast that lay spread on the ground; and, actually encouraged by their mother and her friends, mimicked the convulsive shivers that passed through his mangled carcase! Some of the younger women and girls certainly did screen their eyes from the horrid sight; but all the men, high and low, roared with delight over the fallen and dying creatures.

Spain, and see scarcely any of the people but these officials ; and they are certainly much worse in Spain than anywhere else. Our own experience is perhaps the bitterest, since our chief travels date from the unhappy moment when England filled up the measure of the Spaniard's disgust by requesting him to pay his debts, then standing for ever so many years ; whereat the noble Don rose in indignant wrath from the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean. The great "art of travel" in that year certainly consisted in keeping one's mouth closed ; but alas ! one was occasionally obliged to speak and betray one's British accent,—a betrayal that was invariably and inevitably followed by intentional rudeness, more or less gross ; or, if the bodily strength of the Briton appeared very patent, by muttered imprecations, allusions to "Gibraltar," accompanied by much gnashing of teeth. In fact, if there was one point on which our minds became perfectly clear during our residence in Spain, it was that the subject of Gibraltar was a very sore spot in the Spanish heart. Even among the more educated and courteous of the Spaniards, the conversation, after any mention of England, invariably reaches the rocky peninsula within a very few minutes, and when the speakers became animated it was not pleasant to have the word deliberately hissed in our faces with the very harshest gutturals possible. We always answered these scowls with affectionate smiles and invitations to come and take possession of the Isle of Wight (unfortunately, they never knew where that island was) ; but the only *safe* thing to do in Spain is, when you hear that ominous name, to turn the conversation as quickly as possible. An Englishman in travelling is always supposed to have come for one of two objects, viz. something to do with the *ferro-carril*, or with Gibraltar. And here we may as well mention that to travel *comfortably* in Spain you should look very athletic or very rich : one or the other will command the at least external respect of the Spaniard ; while without either, the unhappy English traveller is simply *nowhere*. The idea of a stranger is not a pleasant one to the Spaniard. He is far too strong in his own conceit to wish for the good opinion of the foreigner, and there are not yet travellers enough for him to realize how much he would gain by them.\* We venture, also, to whisper a word of advice to any of our female friends who may be wishing to wander in the "dear, dear abroad," to choose any other country than Spain for their rambles. Travelling for pleasure is not a thing understood by the Spanish mind in any case, and for ladies to leave home, except as appendages to husbands or fathers, is simply a thing not to be realized. We happen to have gathered a tolerably wide experience of what Spanish men think and say on this subject ; and we beg to register our deliberate conviction that English ladies who have "so enjoyed" Spain, have only

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\* "This romantic, generous, and high-minded Hidalgo . . . has not emancipated himself from that signal mark of inferiority of culture, the violent prejudice against strangers, and he views a request for the payment of its debts as one of the grossest insults that can be offered to a high-minded and honourable nation."—*Times*. July 27, 1865



tried it with their husbands or brothers, or in a large party. No one knows better than a Spaniard on whom and when it is *safe* to make an attack. Moreover, no one can possibly travel in Spain in any comfort unless he, she, or some one of the party, speaks Spanish well, and is *au fait* with the proper compliments of well-bred society. They may be hyperbolic—absurd—what you will, but they are necessary for comfort, and imperative if you wish to be considered a gentleman; and people should not go to the country unless they can conform in some measure to its rules and requisitions. From one end of Spain to the other, and in all classes but the very best, a Spaniard will pity you with the most perfect simplicity if you do not speak his language, and inquire, in all good faith, how you can travel anywhere in the world without it, or enjoy civilized life in any country. To a suggestion that French was considered the language of the world, we have invariably received the same answer, "Oh, no; *you* may think so, but in reality it is Spanish."

Every one knows the difference of the conduct of the French and the English in the Peninsular war; how the French destroyed their buildings, ravaged their country, and stole their pictures; while the English fought their battles, and got nothing for their blood. Yet of the two, the French traveller is, in comparison, welcomed, and the English one abhorred. During 1861 it was our fortune to travel much, by diligence and railway, over several provinces of Spain, and to share many a dinner in *fondas* and *posadas*, mingling with many classes of men; and we will venture to affirm that there seldom passed a day during that time that some one or more of our fellow-travellers did not emphatically inquire of us if we understood their conversation, and, having made sure of the fact, immediately remarked, in loud distinct notes, to his neighbour, "I do hate the English! such a mean, bullying nation," and so on, through all the abusive terms they could make the clearest. We remember one day in Seville rashly inquiring our way to some place from a well-dressed man: he told us, with much detail, which way to go; but it chanced that a few steps further on we met an American gentleman of our acquaintance, a resident in Seville, and shook hands with him: upon seeing which, our well-dressed friend rushed after us, and exclaimed, with the utmost politeness, "Excuse me, your grace. I took you for English, and you won't think so badly of me as to believe I should help *them*. I see now you are Americans, so I have run after you to say it is quite the other way you should go; it will be my pleasure to accompany you now, to make up for my little mistake." And so he did—for could we tell him after that we were English?

This sort of petty spite made one's daily life in travelling uncommonly disagreeable. For instance, one day arriving at the post-office at Madrid, on inquiring for letters, only a small number was presented to us. "Surely there are more addressed to the same name?" we said. The official showed another fat bundle, neatly tied up, but refused to give them to us. We showed our passport, but alas! our companion was designated therein as our "sister," and the Christian name on the letters was wanting

in the passport. We grovelled before that old functionary : we praised the post-office, and everything else in Spain ; we invited him to our house in England as our honoured guest for a year and a day ; we assured him we believed his "doña" could not be as handsome as himself : but nothing would do ; the opportunity of annoying an *Inglese* was too tempting, and our unhappy "sister" left the post-office vanquished and letterless.

In fact, letters are rather a sore subject to English residents in Spain. We learned, after a few months, that a large seal was almost sure at least to delay them some days *en route*, if they ever reached at all ; whether they were considered likely to be of more importance, or what, we could not learn, but letters so marked were invariably and freely cut open and re-sealed with lumps of green (the official coloured) wax, impressed by the official thumb. Even without this temptation, we frequently found tokens of their having been read : either they had been hastily refolded in Spanish shape, or blots of ink had been thrown over their pages, or ends of cigarettes and their ashes were kindly enclosed ; and we calculated, after our return to England, that only about two-thirds of our letters had ever reached ourselves or our correspondents in England.

However, without letters we could live ; without money we could not ; and variously disagreeable were our adventures in obtaining the latter. Once, when we had, for the second time, patiently and silently waited exactly two hours and a half in the room of one of the partners of the largest bank at Valencia, we remarked, with mild dignity, that such detentions were scarcely pleasant or business-like. "Qué gente son estas !" \* from the amiable partner was the exclamation, commencing a loud tirade upon the impatience and general unpleasantness of the English, and double or treble, we need not say, was the "commission" mulcted in consequence from our circular note beyond that which any change of currency could possibly warrant. We indulged ourselves in an innocent revenge ; for one of the carnival masquerade balls happening only three or four days after, we took advantage of a tolerably numerous acquaintance in Valencia to victimize our enemy. The joke was taken up willingly, for the gentleman was a very unpopular person ; and long before the evening was over his own exclamation had been so dinned into his ears by every person he came near, and made the subject of so many practical jokes, that he was fain to slink out of the room in self-defence.

But this want of amiability belongs chiefly to the middle-classes—the least agreeable in any country. The peasant or artisan is very different, and they themselves differ as much from each other in the different provinces of Spain. In the north he is rough ; in the east he is brutal ; in the south he is gracious. The Valenciano will swear at you as he passes on the road, and take care to splash you as he goes ; the Andalusian will beg you to stop while he gathers a fresh flower from the

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\* "What people these are !" literally ; but, used in this way, *gente* may be more properly translated by "pigs."

hedge to replace the one he sees fading in your companion's hair. The Andalusian will offer you his *manta* in the diligence, which, if you are not fond of fleas and worse, you will decline with a whole cascade of compliments and thanks; the Valenciano will insist on occupying the bedroom you have just engaged, and will take it by force if you are unwise enough to demur at the change.

To those who know Spain, there is nothing more amusing than the nonsense talked and written by the English and French about "going to Spain to see the East." Doubtless much of what is good in Spain and the Spaniard has been left there by the Moors of glorious memory; doubtless the industry, the sense of beauty, what honesty he has, and we had almost said what piety he has, have come to him chiefly from his Moorish fathers; but there the affinity ceases. It is by no means easy to point out characteristics common to both which are not equally found in the Italian, the Greek, or any other dwellers in tolerably *al fresco* climates. Chiefest of all is the difference of feeling with regard to women. Woman is at quite as low a level in the Western country as in the Eastern, in proportion; but the only real difference is that the Mussulman preserves his respect for his women by jealous safe-keeping, while the Spaniard has long ago flung all his to the winds, and has now altogether forgotten its meaning. It is not his chivalry, but his want of chivalry, towards women which is so remarkable. If a foreigner and alone, his instinct is to bully her, not in the least as a predatory London gent might do, but from real disapprobation and aversion.

And yet in spite of all this and many other disagreeables, beyond the limits of this paper, we shall always turn away from Spain with the most hearty regret. Of the glorious beauties of the country, this is not the place to speak; nor of the delights of a climate in many respects, we believe, unrivalled in the universe, nor of the incalculable wealth yet wholly undeveloped in the country. For what the Spanish artisan can do, let the admirable roads (where there are any), the beautiful public buildings and well-constructed private houses, the enamelled tiles, the brass and iron work, the ornamental furniture and stuffs, the *mantas*, the velvets, the boots and shoes and all leather-work, the blankets and flannels (certainly superior to ours at the same price), the cigars, the *cerillos*, the gloves, the confectionery,—let all these testify. Who can tell what the lower classes would become, if the upper classes would set them an example of honesty and morality, after a generation or two of wholesome education? Who can say what place, with common honesty and good faith, Spain would have reached by this time on the list of nations? Where would the richness of her almost virgin soil, her mineral treasures, added to the intelligence and sobriety of her people, have placed her? Who can say emphatically enough, how absolutely hopeless any real improvement can be, while one cabinet tricks out another, and all are but the playthings of an ignorant, fanatical, superstitious, and profligate Queen?

Let us, however, leave these dispiriting topics, and devote a few brief pages to more practical subjects, such as our own experience of Spain and Spanish things may render useful or interesting to others.

There are certain articles in Spain that we even believe would be well worth importing into England. We cannot ourselves undertake to give in the present article perfectly accurate prices, and we will therefore mention but a few of the many good manufactures of Spain. Of course no English traveller could possibly flatter himself that he could arrive at any near approximation of price by his own inquiry; an *estranjero* would have to add a *peseta* at least to every *duro*, and the hated Englishman would be in many places charged double. But Valencian flannels, blankets and velvets are certainly worth a trial; the latter are quite as good, if not better, at thirteen shillings a yard, as French velvets sold in London at twenty shillings or more. Enamelled tiles, we are confident, would prove a very profitable investment, especially if the worthy custom became a fashion instead of a rarity, of lining the walls of kitchens, stables, and all such offices with tiles. Cheap Valencian tiles will not bear frost, they are therefore best adapted for indoor purposes. Those for the walls can be had with the pattern in one colour on a bright white ground for one penny the tile; those thick enough to bear the foot cost a fraction more. Both colours and patterns are beautiful, and far more cheerful than the English kinds. The more expensive tiles are very handsome, and these of course will bear frost or anything. Since the cholera and the inundations in the east of Spain these prices may have risen slightly.

Perhaps our best advice would be that of encouraging people to go and judge for themselves. Probably the more the Spaniards become by habit accustomed to the sight of the traveller, the better for the travellers themselves. Only, we must say one word of emphatic advice: *take Spain as you find it*, and if you must grumble, wait till you get home. Above all, keep a civil tongue in your head; compliments are cheap, and you may as well hope to stay in London hotels without money as to be comfortable in Spain without manners and compliments. Don't go, if you do not choose to speak in Spain as the Spaniards do. The discomforts of Spanish travel are quite sufficient in themselves without adding that of making enemies of all you come near. Even the discomforts you can by a little forethought very greatly mitigate; for one thing lay down as an invariable rule, that from one end of Spain to the other you must never count on finding food anywhere short of a great city. If you are going to travel for one day or for three days by rail, diligence, or anyhow, take all the food you will require for that time with you. On the great high-roads, where the diligences stop regularly, you may be pretty sure of good bread, and in the daytime you will usually find dishes of frizzled ham and lukewarm chocolate; in the night there is nothing to be had; and we can assure the reader that a few days of the above fare is very thirsty work. Off the high-roads you can never be *sure* of anything, not even of eatable bread or clean water. In the fruit season the traveller is better off; and it is worth

a journey from England to taste a Carcagente orange gathered on the spot. Figs are not first-rate in Spain, but very eatable; fig-cheese, however, is excellent, and one of the best portable foods for travelling. It is so cheap and good that it is a wonder it has not made its appearance here save as an expensive rarity. Dates may be eaten fresh by the curious in Murcia; but they are as much like African dates as acorns are like apples. Sometimes, however, with a little trouble, the traveller may get a really good meal even at a *posada*, and the hotels in the large cities are always good. Both *posadas* and hotels are clean; indeed it may be remarked that Spain, in comparison with other European countries, is essentially clean; the cottages are always cleanly whitewashed within and without, and the *posadas*, although empty of furniture, have nothing worse than fleas in them. Of course we need not say that to those who are accustomed to the well-bathed eastern, the Spaniard, himself and herself, is decidedly dirty. But we must decline to enter into further detail on this subject.

In no country is a temporary residence more easily managed. For example, at Valencia the newly-arrived traveller sees pieces of notepaper fluttering in the balconies: he learns that one bit in the centre of the balcony signifies unfurnished lodgings; a bit at each end announces them to be furnished. If he engages them unfurnished, he has but to go to certain warehouses, and say that he requires so many sitting-rooms and so many bedrooms furnished, in first, second, or third class. The first consists of furniture covered with velvet; the second in leather or moreen; the third is in plaited straw. He will make his bargain, and haggle as much as he likes for an extra straw carpet or two or an additional *brasero*; but when the bargain is completed the whole of the furniture will be sent in in two or three hours. Good servants are rare birds anywhere, but they are to be had. We always found ours faithful and taking a sort of unsophisticated interest in those they served. Our cookery was by no means elegant or elaborate, but we can truly say it was excellent. Our very first step was to buy a monthly "indulgence" for ourselves and for all our servants to eat meat, butter, &c. on all days and at all seasons; without this our servants would have been miserable, but at the expense of three or four shillings each we made them more than happy. We had, summer and winter, good beef, and sometimes good mutton—poultry and fish in abundance, and vegetables to admiration. The common wines, of Valencia at least, we found utterly detestable; but in Andalucia the inn wines were more drinkable.

But we must not stop to enter into many more details. We recommend travellers to inspect all they can see of the rural schools and the schools belonging to the convents: he will find them, in many cases, above the average of other countries. The hospitals are mostly well managed, and in some places are perfect models. Foundling hospitals abound to a marvellous degree, but we cannot give them as much praise as most other institutions: they appeared to us to be managed with an

ingenious cruelty that can only result in putting most of the unhappy little wretches out of their misery. We confess to having uttered a hearty thanksgiving when we heard that an inundation in Andalusia had carried away some sixty of these miserable little creatures into, it is to be hoped, a pleasanter place. The infants are put into cots in the hospital nurseries, and after being fed by the wet nurses, are locked in for four or five hours, when the nurses re-enter to feed them again, and so on through the twenty-four hours. Meantime the babies scream on untended, and, as may be supposed, but a very few per cent. ever grow up beyond infancy.

Time fails us to speak of the lotteries—a great feature in city life ; or of the theatres ; or of the street singers, especially those of *Passiontide* ; of the *serenos*, the watchmen of the night ; of the *alamedas*, or fashionable promenades in each city ; of provincial fairs and of gipsy gatherings ; or even of the splendid church *funciones* ; or of the noisy delights of carnivals and religious plays and miracles—of all which we shall ever retain the most vivid and pleasant recollections. Descriptions of picture-galleries and cathedrals we leave to other pens than ours. All we can hope for is to have tempted some few to wander in that beautiful land, which we can assure them they can do with safety and pleasure, by dint of good-temper, courage, and, above all, civility.

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## The Village on the Cliff.

### CHAPTER XX.

#### NEVER, NEVER.

PETITPÈRE looked up and smiled, and shook his head a moment after, as he began the recital of all that had befallen them since Reine had been away. It was too true that sad and terrible things had happened, and yet tobacco and gossip were not the less sweet because storms had raged and misfortunes thickened; and the old fellow puffed his pipe, and leisurely recounted his story. "He! poor boy, who would have thought it?" said old Chrétien, as he finished the little tragedy. "He ought to be alive at this moment, and there he was in the cimetière, while two old fellows were still in their sabots." Strangely enough, poor Fontaine had signed his will that very morning, in the presence of M. le Curé and his gardener, so Barbeau reported. It was not known for certain, but it was said that he had left everything to his widow for her life, and appointed her sole guardian to his boy. Poor little woman! it was a rude shock for her. People talked of her return to England. Then Père Chrétien went on to other things. The white cow was ill—it had been hurt in the nostril; Barbeau had examined the wound, he thought badly of it; and, by the way, what was the matter with Madame la Comtesse? She had been up at the farm, asking all manner of questions, ferreting here and everywhere. "She didn't discover much," said old Chrétien, with a chuckle; "but take care, my girl: she looked malicious; I could see it plain enough. Barbeau, too, had commented upon the circumstance. They don't like the Englishman to come too often, that is not hard to divine. Only this morning I had to send him off very short," said Petitpère complacently. "That sort of person it comes, and goes, and amuses itself, and thinks itself of consequence. As for that he might have broken his head in the sea in the place of poor Fontaine for all anybody cared. "Voilà," the old fellow concluded philosophically, "Barbeau says there is no depending"—

"Oh, don't, don't, Petitpère," cried poor Reine, flinging herself down upon the oak bench against the wall, and beginning to cry. "Poor Fontaine, poor friend, poor, poor Catherine! Oh, what a sad world! Oh, how bitter was life!" she cried, in her pathetic voice, hiding her face in her hands, while the sobs came faster and faster. "Fontaine dead! that kind creature, so alive, so full of gentleness and goodness."

Poor soul, was it only for Fontaine that she was mourning, or did her tears flow for all sad hearts, all future troubles, all possible separation?

She was sitting there still; the old man had put down his pipe, and



was patting her on the shoulder with his horny old fingers, and doing his best to console her.

"Now then, now then," said he, "you are not his widow to give way to desolation like this. Hush! there is some one coming. It is perhaps Barbeau . . ."

But even the hated name of Barbeau did not rouse poor Reine as did the step upon the tiled floor of the kitchen and the voice which gladly exclaimed and called her by her name, and then the sweet tear-stained face looked up, and the pathetic eyes met Dick's proud glad glance. For a minute Reine forgot all her doubts, jealousy, hard resolves—forgot everything but Dick for a minute, as he stood before her, holding both her hands in his, and then he spoke.

"You have been badly wanted, dear Reine. I have come for you. I promised that poor little woman to bring you back to her. I knew I should find you this time . . ."

Why did he speak? Ah, why, if this was all he had to say? The tender heart seemed suddenly to grow hard and rough, the light died out of the wistful eyes. Why did he speak, if his first words were to be of Catherine? It was in vain that the girl tried to hush the devilish voice, to put the hateful thought away. Reine stood, with dry eyes and a pale face, glancing from Dick to Petitpère, who was once again sitting doubled up over the fire, shaking his head doubtfully to himself every now and then.

"Could you come now?" Dick persisted.

"Not to-night, sir," interrupted old Chrétien, without looking round. "Reine is tired, and has come from far. To-morrow she will visit the poor lady."

"Where is she?" Reine asked, in an odd indifferent voice, beginning to tie on her cloak. Petitpère shrugged his shoulders. Did he not know by this time that it was useless to attempt to control her? In a minute more Reine and Butler were crossing the dark courtyard together.

"I shall send Dominique after you with the cart," cried Petitpère, coming to the door. "Reine, you would have done better to stay."

They came out into the wide open plain. There were rolling mists, clouds, sudden winds; darkness was descending like a veil. The two went side by side through wreathing vapours; they scarcely broke the silence. For a minute Petitpère watched their dusky figures, which were hardly perceptible as they crossed the road, and struck across the fields. Reine, walking along beside her lover, tried to put away all thought that was not of the present. Of a present that to others might seem dark and doubtful and chill, and yet which to them both was vibrating with an unconscious and unspeakable delight, for were they not walking together through the darkness? And yet at the same time they were both doubting whether it was a reality that made them happy, or only a semblance of what might have been true once.

Alas, Reine was not strong enough to forbid sad thoughts of the future to come between them. She was so strange, so reserved, at once so agitated and so unmoved, that Butler, who had been looking forward all through his long sick watch to this happy meeting, was disappointed, wounded, and pained. When Catherine had sent for him, and begged him to bring her friend, it was not of this Reine he had been thinking, but of another, tender and full of sympathy. This one was so sad and so cold that she seemed to freeze him over and sadden him, and all the while she, poor soul, was aching and sickening for the loving words, the tender reassurances she had longed and hoped to hear. It was in vain Dick tried to extort the sympathy from her he wanted. She would not, could not respond. Reine was for the moment wondering who might be most to be pitied if—if— She interrupted him once when he was speaking of Catherine.

"Do you know that Madame de Tracy was up at the farm yesterday? She asked my grandfather a great many questions. Can she suspect the truth? Can Madame Fontaine have told her? . . ."

"I am sure she guesses the real state of the case," Dick said; "but Catherine Fontaine has not told her! Poor little woman! she has other things to think of just now."

"Is she very unhappy?"

"How can you ask? Should not you be unhappy if I had been drowned instead of Fontaine?"

The girl shivered, and then suddenly, with a passionate movement, drew her hand from his arm, and almost pushed him away.

"I am not married to you," she said, bitterly and furiously; "perhaps if I were only your widow, I could bear to part from you. Widows recover and marry again . . ."

"Hush, Reine," said Dick, angrily.

"Why do you mind my saying this?" persisted the girl, in her rough grating voice.

"Because it is not like you to show no sympathy for some one in great sorrow. I think you must be already sorry for what you have said," the young man answered gravely.

The girl did not speak, except, indeed, by a strange and wistful look, and walked on by his side in silence.

I have no excuse to make for Reine Chrétien, nor do I want to make one for her. With all her faults, her pride, her waywardness, there was a noble truth and devotion in her nature that spoke for itself, and forced you to forgive, even while you were vexed still and angry. The two walked on for a long way. For once evil and good were urging her in the same direction. Her jealousy was helping her to fulfil what she had grown to look upon as a duty.

Ah me, how often it happens in life that the generous self, the passionate great heart, unconscious, or perhaps ashamed of its own tenderness and nobility, takes, in self-defence, small means to accomplish

great ends. Reine was one of those who would swallow a camel and strain at a gnat. We have all of us been blinded and ungrateful in our life, at one time or another, unconsciously accepting together the great sacrifice and the small one, grudgingly granted; we have all complained, perhaps, of the vexing word, the passing caprice of a moment, unconscious—ah! for ever unconscious of the whole world of love, of sacrifice, of utter devotion, which was ours just then to forget, to ignore, to accept without thanks, to abandon, if we would, scarcely heeded.

They had reached the gate of the chalet by this time; the moonlight seemed to be streaming everywhere.

"Oh, Richard, Richard, do you mean to tell me you do not know that she has always loved you?" cried Reine, with a sudden burst, as she left him, and went in.

The poor little chalet, with all its absurd ornamentations and whirling flags and weathercocks, looked so sad and forlorn, so black and hearse-like in the darkness. The blinds of some of the windows were down; a pale light shone in Catherine's window. Dick, pacing up and down outside in the moonlight, looked up at it more than once, and laughed a little bitterly to himself over the perversity of women. He did not like Reine the better for her jealousy. It was not worthy of her, he thought. The house was very dark and silent within and without. Monsieur and Madame Mérard had gone away for a few days; Madame Binaud had come for them, and Catherine had piteously begged them to go, to leave her with Toto. She was only longing for silence and rest.

Poor old Mérard's little piping voice quavered when he came to say good-by, and his jolly face seemed circled with dark round wrinkles which had not been there before. "Pauvre petite," said he, kissing the two little cold clinging hands which he held in his. Madame Mérard, too, seemed changed and greatly shaken. She said little, but trotted about, overturning drawers, and keeping vigilant watch over the goings-on in the house. Just before starting, she carried up a cup of strong broth to Catherine, which she had made with her own hands. "Drink it down hot," said she. "There is a good pound of meat in it, for I arranged it myself."

Dick would not have thought Reine hard or perverse could he have seen into the room from where the faint ray of light was streaming, and where poor little Catherine was sitting on a low chair by the smouldering fire, while Reine knelt beside her, holding her hand in a tender clasp. Reine had that strange gift of healing and comfort which some people possess; there was strength and peace in the touch of her strong gentle hands, and in the wise wistful look of her eyes. Catherine spoke a few broken words telling her how it had happened, speaking of Dick's courage and devotion. Reine listened, gazing into the fire, keeping time with her heart to Richard's footsteps outside—it was long long before she listened to them again—the clock ticked monotonously, and time went on.

And then they heard a voice speaking down below. "Justine, do not let Mademoiselle Chrétien go without seeing me," said somebody.

"It is Madame de Tracy," said Catherine, languidly. "She has been here all day."

It was Madame de Tracy's voice, it was Madame de Tracy herself who stood waiting in ambush in the kitchen, waiting in agitation, palpitation, and excitement, expecting her prey, not without some alarm, poor lady: for her own claws were not very fierce, nor her bites very fatal, and, dragon though she was, she would have liked to run away. Justine the cynical saw that something was going on. It did not concern her; she only shrugged her shoulders as she plodded about the house from one creaking wooden room to another. She was putting away the linen in the maire's little office, which was now at last disponible. It was convenient and near the kitchen—she had always wanted the place for her tablecloths. Coming downstairs with an armful of linen, she met Reine leaving Catherine's room. "You are wanted in the kitchen," said she. "Madame de Tracy certainly will not let you go without seeing her." And as she spoke Madame de Tracy, with her bonnet all on one side, came out at the sound of the voices, and held open the door with much difficulty.

"I have to speak to you. Come in here, if you please. My nephew is outside, but it is to you, mademoiselle, I address myself. He is waiting for you—do not deny it; I know all, everything." And the countess blazed round upon the peasant-girl, who, however, seemed but little discomposed by the attack. "Ah, mademoiselle," continued Madame de Tracy, suddenly changing from ferocity to supplication. "If you do really care for that foolish, impetuous boy, you will forgive me and sympathize with me when I implore you to reflect upon the sacrifice he is making—a sacrifice that will disgrace him, and drag him down in the eyes of the world. It is so hard in its judgments. Is that door securely closed? I would not for the world that Justine should overhear, that Dick should suspect me of influencing you. He was furious once not long ago, when I foolishly dreaded another attraction, but this would be still less . . . still more—Catherine at least was. . . ." The poor lady stopped short, embarrassed, unable to finish her sentence. Well she might be, for she caught sight of Reine's indignant cheeks burning, and of the much-dreaded Dick himself coming in through the glass-door. A chill night-wind surged in as he opened the door, of which the shutters had not yet been closed. He had been quietly walking outside up and down, biding his time. It had come now; and now Dick guessed in an instant what had happened. He went straight up to Reine, and put his arm round her, as if to defend her, and yet Reine was strong enough to defy the poor trembling, agitated lady, without his assistance.

"You mustn't say anything to Reine, aunt Matilda, that you wouldn't say to me," said Dick, haughtily.

"Dear boy," cried Madame de Tracy, more and more fluttered and anxious, "indeed and indeed I only speak for your good and hers. Of

course you have passed your word ; but you do not know the world as I do, nor to what you are exposing . . . . you —you . . . .”

“Hush !” said Dick, speaking savagely, almost for the first time in his life. “Reine and I understand one another very well, and are quite willing to put up with any inconvenience ;” and his voice softened : he looked at the girl with a smile. But she did not answer ; she was quite pale, and her eyes were on fire. She drew herself up to her full length, and stood there in the moonlight in her country-dress, looking like a wraith. Even her words sounded faint and toneless.

“Heaven knows,” she said quietly, “that I am ready to die for you, Richard, but I will never marry you—never, never. It is not for the first time that I hear these things, that I reflect upon the sacrifice you make, upon the danger of marriage ill-assorted and unhappy. Nothing will ever change my affection ; you are part of my life, of my prayers, ever since I first knew you.” . . . The passionate cadence of her voice broke into a sob. Reine spoke with emotion, feeling that she was safe in Madame de Tracy’s agitated presence ; she imagined Richard would say nothing, do nothing, but somehow she was mistaken, and she found herself folded in the young man’s arms.

“My Reine,” he said, “I want no words—I understand.” But the girl put herself quickly away out of his embrace. What strange love-parting was this in the sad house of mourning !

“You do not understand me,” cried Reine ; “and you, madame, need not be so much afraid of the harm I shall do him,” she said passionately, turning to Madame de Tracy. “I shall not drag him down ; I shall not force him to keep his word ; I shall not disgrace him !”

The girl’s anger and sorrow had gradually reached a hysterical and almost uncontrollable point. The things Madame de Tracy had glibly explained, meaning no harm, poor lady, had nearly maddened her. Her allusion to Catherine was the last drop in the brimming cup. In vain Dick tried to calm and to soothe her. She did not listen ; she would not look at him even ; for a minute she stared through the glass-door into the moonlight without, and then at Madame de Tracy, agitated and fleckered by the blaze of the fire.

“Catherine, of whom you spoke just now,” cried the girl, “would have been a thousand thousand times more suited than I should ever be. Ah ! do not interfere again, madame. You do not know what you are doing !” And with a scared sort of look Reine broke away from Dick, and pushed at the glass-door, and ran out into the night. She had forgotten all about it, but she found Dominique with the cart waiting at the garden-gate. Dick, following an instant after, only came in time to see her drive away.

I think if he had caught her then—if he had scolded and then forgiven her—all would have been right between them then ; but the horse set off at a trot down the hill. The cart rolled away with a dull jolt of wheels over the sodden earth ; mists came between them and distance greater and greater. Butler was too angry and hurt to follow her at the time,—more

angry, I think, because she went off in the cart than for all she had said to vex him.

"Never, never." Did some one whisper it in his ear? What a strange creature—lovely, womanly, tender, and pathetic, and furious; how hard to satisfy, how difficult to love, how impossible not to love.

Dick spent a sulky evening at the château, smoking by himself in the smoking-room, while Madame de Tracy retired with fluttering dignity to her own apartment. Jean thought it a bad business; but it was his maxim not to interfere. It was no affair of his. Dick was old enough to attend to his own concerns; and though Mrs. Beamish and Ernestine went down upon their knees to him, they could not undo the part or prevent him from thinking that there was but one woman in the world, and her name was Reine Chrétien.

Dick made up his mind very quietly, without asking any one's leave. He was a little touched, and very much provoked, by the allusions to poor Madame Fontaine; but he hoped there was some mistake, and rather avoided dwelling upon that part of the subject. Reine had been jealous, as women are sometimes. He walked up to the farm before breakfast. The fine weather had come at last; fields and furrows were twinkling with early dew; a thousand lights and crystals and refractions were shining out of the earth; a cheerful sound of labour echoed under the dazzling morning vault. Old Chrétien was sitting on the bench sunning himself outside the great archway in his blue smock; the queer old pinnacles, and chimney-stacks, and pigeon-cotes were all distinct against the clear heaven, and the two tall poplar-trees on the roadside showed every twig and spray full with the coming leaves. Paris came to meet Dick, shaking his lazy long body and wagging his tail. Petitpère sat staring at the field where his men were busy digging up vegetables and loading a cart.

"Good-morning," cried Dick, cheerfully. "Monsieur Chrétien, where shall I find your granddaughter?"

"That is more than I can tell you," said the old fellow, looking utterly vacant and stupid. "Reine is gone, and I am busy enough in her absence. As monsieur sees, I am getting in my turnips." And he pointed to the field where they were growing, and where the labourers were busy digging up the earth. It was the field which the lovers had crossed in the darkness the night before.

"Gone?" said Dick, looking at the turnips, without seeing anything before him.

"She is gone back to the convent," the old man said. "I should not like it for myself; but she finds her pleasure there."

"Did she leave no letter, no message for me?" Richard asked, trying to light a cigar, though his fingers were trembling as he did so. Petitpère gazed stupidly at the young man.

"I was to let her know as soon as you were gone, that she might come back and see to the fattening of the pigs," said he; "that was what she said."

With a sudden movement, Dick threw the unlighted cigar away over the hedge.

"She need not delay her return on my account," said Butler, flushing up, and turning his back to Petitpère. "I shall leave the place to-day for good. Pray tell her so when she comes back to—to her pigs."

Old Petitpère shrugged his shoulders for the last time in this little history, and rubbed his old knees, pleased with the effect of that parting shaft: and yet he was a little sorry, too, for the young fellow as he went swinging angrily along the road, and disappeared at the turn by the willow-trees.

Dick was far away safe among the green pastures and cool waters of Lambswold, and Reine might have come back from her convent without fear of meeting him; but many and many a day went by before the girl returned to the farm-kitchen, to her accustomed ways and works, and, when she came, it was a wan and weak and weary woman recovering from an illness through which the good nuns had nursed her. Poor Reine! she came back to Petitpère and the pigs and the cows for companionship and sympathy. She could not think of the past—it filled her with such doubt and remorse; she did not dare to contemplate the future, it seemed so endless, so grey, so unbearable; she would not have been sorry to die in the convent in the sunny ward among the tranquil nuns, and so to solve the difficulty and riddle of her life. But it was only a low nervous fever from which she had suffered, and she knew that there was no chance of any end to it, but that prosaic end of getting well and going home to her dull and neglected duties. If Catherine had been at Petitport she would have found comfort and happiness with the tender little woman. But a chance had happened, which would have been stranger if it had happened sooner, and Catherine was away in England with her sisters, looking after some property which had come to her and to them. What did she want with it now? Fontaine had provided for her, and she liked better to owe ease and comfort to him, to his care and his tender thought for her, than to a chance by which Lady Farebrother had died before she could sign her name to a will. Mr. Bland would have been a good many thousand pounds the richer if the poor lady had lived a few hours longer. He never had even the satisfaction of knowing it; for, though both the doctor and lawyer were sent for, they both came too late. As it was, Catherine's two little sisters came in for no inconsiderable portion of their aunt's possession, and a certain sum was left to Catherine, their guardian, by their mother's will.

It was in autumn this year, after poor Fontaine's death, that I stayed at Petitport, and first made Reine Chrétien's acquaintance on the sea-shore, as I described in the beginning of my little history. These were not prosperous times. There was a great deal of sickness in the village, the harvest had failed, and wherever I went I heard complaints and witnessed pain and suffering. Reine seemed to be everywhere, helping and



tending her poorer neighbours. It is impossible not to believe that some people have an unexplained power, which must be magnetic of its kind, for healing and soothing pain. Reine possessed this odd influence over the sick, and was conscious of it although she could not account for it; she unfortunately had full opportunity for exercising her gift. Fever and famine were common enough in the poor little village; these two grim visitors were almost as certain to come in their season as the bathers and holiday-makers with the summer and sunshine. This year fell unusually heavy upon the little population; there was hardly a family that had not some member stricken with the fever. Reine herself lost her grandfather soon before I came to the village. For some time she was living by herself in a great empty farmhouse on a hill. When I knew her first she seemed to take to me, perhaps because I was English, perhaps because I happened to know something of the people she most cared for, partly because I was fascinated by her. After that day on the sands I went up to see her once or twice at the farm. A widow woman was living with her, a certain Madame Marteau, to whose little daughter she was greatly attached.

Poor Reine! these were hard times for her. On the very day I first made her acquaintance she had heard a report from Justine at the chalet concerning Catherine, which had stirred up many a feeling still fresh and vivid, though she scarcely believed the report. Sometimes she spoke of the past, but with evident pain and shrinking and doubt and remorse. Had she done right? Had she done wrong? She seemed to be sure of nothing but of the love which was in her.

Once, only once, she sat down to write to him. She never meant to send the letter, but it was a relief to her to put down upon paper all that was in her heart,—all her loving remembrance,—to write the words of benediction, although he might never need her blessing now. When she had written the tender little scrawl, she burnt it; but the words were somewhere, everywhere she thought, as she saw the cinders float away. She said to herself that no fire could burn them out, nothing could destroy them; in some distant world, if not in this one, they would find him.

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#### CHAPTER LAST.

##### "TURN, FORTUNE, TURN THY WHEEL."

ONE day Reine, walking down the village street, met Madame Mérard coming from the chalet, where she had been superintending some packing and reordering. The old lady was trotting heavily along, with a large packet on her arm. She was panting fiercely, in a state of fume and of excitement. No wonder. "She had heard an announcement," she said, "which she had always predicted—always. What else was to be expected of a young woman so entirely engrossed by society and amusement as

Madame Fontaine had always shown herself." Madame M  rard declined to give her authority for the news she had heard. "Non ! time would prove the truth of her assertions. Well-informed and dispassionate persons had assured her that Catherine Fontaine was on the eve of contracting a second and highly advantageous alliance with Mr. Butler. In that event the cha  t and all the elegant fittings would return to Toto. Most providentially a clause to that effect had been inserted in the will, at the cur  's suggestion ; for the poor infatuated Charles would never have shown this necessary prevision. Poor man, already forgotten ! Ah, how differently she, Madame M  rard, had acted under similar circumstances. Although assiduously pressed, within six months of her widowhood, to make up her mind, by no less than three different gentlemen, in nowise connected with one another, she had refused to give any answer whatever for a space of two whole years, during which their attentions had been unremitting. At the end of that time, having made Monsieur M  rard's acquaintance, she had dismissed the other aspirants with every mark of esteem and consideration. Now-a-days things were different. Do not seek for disinterested affection. Oh, no," said Madame M  rard, "for it would be no use." And the old lady stumped away at her quickest pace up the road, and across the field ; she had business at the ch  teau, she vaguely intimated, snorting and shaking her head. In truth, her authority was only that of Justine at the cha  t, who had heard the news from Baptiste at the ch  teau, who had it in a letter from Barbe, now in England with her mistress ; and Madame M  rard was anxious to gather every particular.

Poor Reine did not take so much pains to verify the news. She had heard some such report before, that seemed corroborated now. It was natural, and only what she had expected all along. The blow had fallen at last. Amen. She knotted her two hands together and walked along erect and abstracted, with eyes that seemed looking at a far-off distance, silent, with a passionate cry in her heart. She walked on to the little village graveyard on the road-side, behind the iron railing where her mother was lying and Petitp  re resting under the poplar-tree, and where, in a sunny corner, Fontaine's name was carved upon the stone-cross which Catherine had put up to his memory, and over which the ivy was creeping.

The struggle which came to Reine then was that sore one which comes to each one of us, at one time or another, when passionate hopes die away, and longings—how eager none can know, except each one for himself ; when the last hope fails, and when the aching void and emptiness of the future seem bearing down like the inevitable dusk at the end of a busy day. Darkness and oblivion and death would seem welcome at such times ; rather than the dim shadow and grey silence of these sad twilight hours,—dark grey, though the sun is shining perhaps, and the summer lights flooding the land. Then the fight begins, a lonely one with no witness, for who can see or understand another's mood ? And

the fight is this. "I wanted that, I tried for this, I would have been the person that I am not. I would have liked the happiness which is denied me. Give, give, O Lord, unto thy servant. Is not happiness my right? Is not content my right, and success and love and prosperity?" And even amid the fierce pangs of pain and disappointment the mad question is answered. "Why should not sorrow and disappointment be thy right? Why should not the experience of grief be thine? the knowledge of evil as well as of good? Submit, oh, submit, poor heart!" And the spirit seems to speak to the weary body, and one last desperate effort comes for resignation, for obedience to the terrible teaching, for acquiescence. "We bow to Heaven that willed it so."

In this frame of mind everything all round about seems to have an answering voice to urge, to help, to comfort. When all seems lost there comes a new courage, a new peace dawning overhead, life bursting from the dry branches, light from the clouds, the very stones cry out and testify in the world all roundabout. Reine, walking homeward along the cliff, read a thousand meanings in the sights along her way—peace, resignation, regret, remembrances more or less aching; but singing a song all the while, which echoed with hitherto undreamt-of meaning: there was comfort in the sound of the sea, in its flowing music, its minor notes, in the cries for help, in the rush of wind blowing here and there, in the very moods of her heart changing from one emotion to another. Even the trembling shadow of the poplar-tree upon the turf seemed to whisper peace to her and tranquillity; and so by degrees her sad excitement abated. She did not reproach herself; she did not know now whether she had been most to blame for that which she should regret all her life; but when she reached home, she felt somehow that the worst was over. Little Josette ran up to her, and pulled her by the hand into the everyday world again, telling her to come and see the galette she and her mother had cooked for dinner; Paris rubbed his head against his mistress's black gown; Madame Marteau came smiling to the door to greet her.

Reine, coming and going about her business with a pale face and a sad heart, all that day kept telling herself that it was too late to regret, but not too late to love still, and then she determined to write to Dick once again; and this time the letter was sent. It was addressed to Catherine, though it was intended for Dick. Only a few words, in the Frenchwoman's quaint stiff handwriting:—"I have heard news of you," she wrote. "With my whole heart I pray heaven for your happiness—that heart which is full of love for you, of hope for the future, and of faith in your tender friendship. You will come here some day—will you not?—both of you, and give me the greatest happiness which I can hope for on earth—the happiness of seeing you happy?"

And then Reine, holding Josette by the hand, went and slipped the letter herself into the box in the village-wall, where it lay until old Pierre, the postman, with his clumsy key and his old worn pouch, carried it away to Bayeux, across the plain.

Dick was sitting with Catherine when this letter was put into her hand. She flushed up, poor little widow, and began to tremble when she read it, and with a sudden movement half held it out to Butler, and then changed her mind and took it back once more; and so sat, without speaking for a minute, with her dark eyes fixed gravely upon his face. She looked like a child trying to remember some half-forgotten lesson, and Dick wondered what words she was trying to fashion. It was a long, low, old-fashioned room in which they were sitting—the drawing-room of a house on the terrace at Richmond, with three deep windows looking out upon the loveliest haze and distance upon the river—wandering at its own sweet will—upon the showers of autumnal gold sparkling beneath the mists that were spreading to the silver hills. Toto and Totty were in one of the windows, whispering and exploding into sudden shrieks of laughter at one another's witticisms. Rosy was curled up over a novel on the floor; and Catherine, sitting in her little bowery corner, with some work and some flowers on her table, was looking prettier and more gentle than ever in her black dress, with her plaintive childish face crowned with the sad dignity of a widow's cap. So she sat talking to the melancholy and ill-humoured young man in the arm-chair beside her. "You must find me a great bore," Dick was saying; "I come and grumble, and abuse everybody and everything. I tried to go back to my painting this morning—confound it, I can do nothing with it; I can do nothing but grumble." Dick often rode over to see the little widow; he would come in the worst of spirits, and go away cheered and touched by Madame Fontaine's constant kindness and sympathy. The little woman had learnt out of the depths of her own morbid experiences to be tender and gentle and forbearing with others wandering in the same dreary labyrinth in which she had been utterly lost only a very little while ago; so it seemed to her, looking back. Things were different now, and Catherine could not help wondering why, sometimes, and feeling that to the dearest friend, the tenderest, the most loyal simple heart that ever beat, she owed more than she could ever pay with a lifetime of love and fidelity. She did not feel any particular gratitude to Lady Farebrother, whose money had contributed to the pleasant home and its various luxuries, and was doing more good now than it had ever done in the old lady's lifetime; but the helping hand, the kindness, the protecting love, which first rescued her was Fontaine's, and Catherine did not forget it: one was a chance, the other a blessing. Catherine, sitting there with Reine's letter in her hand, wondered over the many changes and chances of this mortal life. She knew well enough by this time that poor Madame de Tracy was only eager to repair the breach between her and her nephew; that Mrs. Butler and Catherine Beamish were longing to prevent the possible and horrible mis-alliance that was always hanging over the family; and that they would all have gladly and eagerly consented to a marriage between Madame Fontaine and this terrible Richard. She sadly wonders why she, a widow woman, is deemed a fitter wife for Dick now, than two years ago, when all her

heart's best devotion was his. Catherine felt she loved him still, as some women must love the ideal of their youth—loved him with a gentle, true-hearted friendship and faithful sympathy that would be always his; but not as Reine loved him. Ah! that love was alive, and did not die at its birth. As for Dick himself, he made no profession of affection—he was sincerely fond of Catherine. He was touched—how could he help it?—by the knowledge of her old affection for him. He came, with a longing for sympathy, for a kind soul to talk to, from his empty, lonely house to Catherine's tranquil bright home. He came with a sad scorn for himself in his heart; but there he was sitting beside her day after day. She suited him better than his own relations. Reine, who he thought was true as steel, had deceived him and jilted him. Catherine had but to put out her hand, he was not unwilling; and Catherine, still looking him full in the face, put out her hand, but Reine's little letter was in it.

"Oh, Richard," Madame Fontaine said, unconsciously calling him by his Christian name, "I want you to read this, to forgive me for what I am going to say——"

Her eyes were brimming, her voice was failing, but she made a great effort and spoke. Just now everything seemed of very little consequence to her in comparison with the great sadness which had long filled her heart. There was a pathos in her tones of which she was unconscious, as she tried, by talking as straight and direct to the point as Reine herself might have done, to put away at once, for ever, all misconception. At another time, perhaps, she could not have spoken as she did just then. But her sorrow still encompassed her like a shield; she was invulnerable; a new strength had come to her from her very weakness and remorse for the past.

"I did not love my husband as I ought to have loved him when I married him," she said. "I deserve anything—everything. Even this explanation is a punishment for my folly. But if I had to live my life again now, and if I might choose, with open eyes, between the man who loved me and—and—I would not have things otherwise. Oh, Richard, you do not think me ungrateful for speaking? I know all that passed. Poor Reine, dear Reine," said the true-hearted little woman; "there is no one so noble, so faithful. She left you because she loved you. Do you know how ill she has been? Miss Williamson (it was of the present writer that Catherine was speaking then) has written to me about her. She thinks she will die some day, if you leave her much longer alone. Oh, Richard, dear friend, won't you forgive her and me, and go back to her again? No one has ever loved you as she does."

Those of my good friends who already despise Dick Butler, and who think him a poor creature at best, and no better than his paintings, will, I fear, despise him still more, for his eyes were full of tears when he looked up at last from the paper on which Reine's few words of sad congratulation were standing in black and white before him.

"God bless you, dear lady," he said, taking Madame Fontaine's out-

stretched hand, and starting up. "You have saved me from committing a great wrong. I will write to you to-morrow when I have seen her."

And then he went away quickly, without noticing the children, and a minute afterwards they heard his horse's feet clattering down the road. Then the three children, who had been listening with all their ears, and perfectly understanding everything, and thrilling with sympathy as children do, came and flung themselves upon the little widow, almost crushing her down upon the sofa.

"No, no, no," said Toto, in his broken English, "I shall not 'ave you mary. I want you, and when I'm a man." . . . "Oh, Cathy, you won't leave us again, will you? Promise, please promise," cried Totty, and Rosa said nothing, but threw away her novel, griped one of Cathy's poor little hands tight in hers, crushing it with all her might, until her sister, half laughing, half crying, had to call out for mercy. And so, with one last bright appealing look, Catherine happily disappears, in the children's adoring but somewhat tyrannical embrace.

Good-by, little Catherine. Yours is no hard fate, after all. Toto is your defender; Rosy and Totty your faithful companions; friends and plenty and peaceful leisure are yours now.

Courseulles, where the oysters are preserved, and where the establishment is situated of which poor Fontaine spoke with so much enthusiasm, is a dreary little tumble-down village of odds and ends; of broken barrels, torn garments, oyster-heaps, and swinging shutters, standing upon the border of a great mud marsh, which at low water reaches out for a mile or more to meet a grey and turbid sea. The oysters are sorted out in long tanks, according to size, and fatten undisturbed, and in their places, round a little counting-house which stands in the middle of these calm and melancholy waters. The shutters swing, in the village a child or two turns over the oyster-heaps, the ragged garments flutter in the wind. It is not a place likely to attract mere pleasure-seekers, and yet as Dominique, the day after that little conversation at Richmond, comes leading the horse out of the stable of the inn at Courseulles, he meets a gentleman who has ridden over from Petitport upon M. de Tracy's bay mare, and who quietly asks him to see to the horse, and to tell him where Mademoiselle Chretien is to be found.

"Mademoiselle is in the counting-house," says Dominique, staring and grinning, and showing his great red gums; and Richard, for it is Richard of course, makes his way across the desolate waste between the inn and the oyster-tanks, and opens a gate for himself and walks along a narrow raised pathway leading to the little counting-house.

Before Butler could reach the door it opened, and Reine came out and stood for an instant looking at the great waste where the dredgers were at work, and where a dirty red gleam of sunset was glaring upon the mud. She sighed, and then she turned suddenly, feeling, as people do, that some one was watching her. Some one! She turned and looked with a

quick sudden motion, and then, although she stood quite still, all her heart seemed to go out to welcome the one person in the whole world she most wearied for, and least thought she should see ever again. She did not speak, but, somehow, she was in his arms, and her wondering, tender, passionate eyes were recounting silently all the story of the long sad months through which she had wasted ; and as Dick looked at her, when he saw her sweet face once more, the dreary marshes, the falling houses, seemed to be touched with some brightest and most sudden brilliance. Everything was plain to them both. I don't think they either of them ever knew how or in what words the story was told—the best and most perfect story which belongs to this complaining world ; to the world in which there are sad histories and wicked ones, in which some stories are well forgotten, and others, alas ! never uttered ; but in which the sacred inspiration of love comes now and again to kindle cold hearts, to brighten sad lives, to bless and to cheer the failing and doubtful, and to tell them that a living and sacred power is moving upon the troubled waters of life.

We most of us have seen at one time or another great rocks piled upon rocks, landslips, and devastations, blasted trunks of trees sliding down the fierce sides of the mountains, the overflow of angry waters, vapour floating mid air in the solitude. And Nature working by some great law unknown, and only vaguely apprehended by us insects crawling a little way up the sides of her vast chasms, heaps and orders in some mighty fashion, and brings about noblest harmonies out of chaos. And so, too, out of the dire dismays and confusions of the secret world come results both mighty and gentle : great rocks stand shading daisies from the midday heat ; trees upturned by some avalanche, lie soft upon lichen and little clinging mosses ; there are fissures where the snow lies dazzling ; and huge stones sliding down the sides of the mountain seem arrested by the soft sprays of gentle little creeping plants, whose green leaves sparkle against the granite.

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